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POETICAL WORKS

OF

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

IV

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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

IV
LATER POEMS
ETC.



Author's Edition

EDINBURGH
DAVID DOUGLAS, CASTLE STREET
1892

KING ALFRED'S COLLEGE
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BUNKER-HILL BATTLE

AND OTHER POEMS.

1874-1877.

GRANDMOTHER'S STORY OF BUNKER-HILL BATTLE

AS SHE SAW IT FROM THE BELFRY.

'TIS like stirring living embers when, at
 eighty, one remembers
All the achings and the quakings of "the
 times that tried men's souls";
When I talk of *Whig* and *Tory*, when I tell
 the *Rebel* story,
To you the words are ashes, but to me
 they're burning coals.

I had heard the musket's rattle of the April
 running battle;
Lord Percy's hunted soldiers, I can see their
 red coats still;

But a deadly chill comes o'er me, as the day
looms up before me,
When a thousand men lay bleeding on the
slopes of Bunker's Hill.

'Twas a peaceful summer's morning, when
the first thing gave us warning
Was the booming of the cannon from the
river and the shore :

“Child,” says grandma, “what's the
matter, what is all this noise and
clatter ?

Have those scalping Indian devils come to
murder us once more ?”

Poor old soul ! my sides were shaking in the
midst of all my quaking,
To hear her talk of Indians when the guns
began to roar :

She had seen the burning village, and the
slaughter and the pillage,
When the Mohawks killed her father with
their bullets through his door.

Then I said, “Now, dear old granny, don't
you fret and worry any,
For I'll soon come back and tell you whether
this is work or play ;

There can't be mischief in it, so I won't be
gone a minute"—

For a minute then I started. I was gone
the livelong day.

No time for bodice-lacing or for looking-
glass grimacing ;

Down my hair went as I hurried, tumbling
half-way to my heels ;

God forbid your ever knowing, when there's
blood around her flowing,

How the lonely, helpless daughter of a quiet
household feels !

In the street I heard a thumping ; and I
knew it was the stumping

Of the Corporal, our old neighbour, on that
wooden leg he wore,

With a knot of women round him,—it was
lucky I had found him,

So I followed with the others, and the
Corporal marched before.

They were making for the steeple,—the old
soldier and his people ;

The pigeons circled round us as we climbed
the creaking stair.

Just across the narrow river—oh, so close it
made me shiver!—

Stood a fortress on the hill-top that but
yesterday was bare.

Not slow our eyes to find it; well we knew
who stood behind it,
Though the earthwork hid them from us,
and the stubborn walls were dumb:
Here were sister, wife, and mother, looking
wild upon each other,
And their lips were white with terror as
they said, THE HOUR HAS COME!

The morning slowly wasted, not a morsel
had we tasted,
And our heads were almost splitting with
the cannons' deafening thrill,
When a figure tall and stately round the
rampart strode sedately;
It was PRESCOTT, one since told me; he
commanded on the hill.

Every woman's heart grew bigger when we
saw his manly figure,
With the banyan buckled round it, standing
up so straight and tall;

Like a gentleman of leisure who is strolling
out for pleasure,
Through the storm of shells and cannon-shot
he walked around the wall.

At eleven the streets were swarming, for
the red-coats' ranks were forming ;
At noon in marching order they were moving
to the piers ;
How the bayonets gleamed and glistened,
as we looked far down, and listened
To the trampling and the drum-beat of the
belted grenadiers !

At length the men have started, with a
cheer (it seemed faint-hearted),
In their scarlet regimentals, with their knap-
sacks on their backs,
And the reddening, rippling water, as after
a sea-fight's slaughter,
Round the barges gliding onward blushed
like blood along their tracks.

So they crossed to the other border, and
again they formed in order ;
And the boats came back for soldiers, came
for soldiers, soldiers still :

The time seemed everlasting to us women
faint and fasting,—
At last they 're moving, marching, marching
proudly up the hill.

We can see the bright steel glancing all
along the lines advancing,—
Now the front rank fires a volley,—they
have thrown away their shot ;
For behind their earthwork lying, all the
balls above them flying,
Our people need not hurry ; so they wait
and answer not.

Then the Corporal, our old cripple (he would
swear sometimes and tippie),—
He had heard the bullets whistle (in the old
French war) before,—
Calls out in words of jeering, just as if they
all were hearing,—
And his wooden leg thumps fiercely on the
dusty belfry floor :—

“Oh ! fire away, ye villains, and earn King
George's shillin's,
But ye'll waste a ton of powder afore a
'rebel' falls ;

You may bang the dirt and welcome, they 're
as safe as Dan'l Malcolm
Ten foot beneath the gravestone that you 've
splintered with your balls ! ”

In the hush of expectation, in the awe and
trepidation
Of the dread approaching moment, we are
well-nigh breathless all ;
Though the rotten bars are failing on the
rickety belfry railing,
We are crowding up against them like the
waves against a wall.

Just a glimpse (the air is clearer), they are
nearer,—nearer,—nearer,
When a flash—a curling smoke-wreath—
then a crash—the steeple shakes—
The deadly truce is ended ; the tempest's
shroud is rended ;
Like a morning mist it gathered, like a
thunder-cloud it breaks !

Oh the sight our eyes discover as the blue-
black smoke blows over !
The red-coats stretched in windrows as a
mower rakes his hay ;

Here a scarlet heap is lying, there a head-
long crowd is flying
Like a billow that has broken and is shivered
into spray.

Then we cried, "The troops are routed !
they are beat—it can't be doubted !
God be thanked, the fight is over !"—Ah !
the grim old soldier's smile !
"Tell us, tell us why you look so?" (we
could hardly speak, we shook so),—
"Are they beaten? *Are* they beaten?
ARE they beaten?"—"Wait a while."

Oh the trembling and the terror ! for too
soon we saw our error :
They are baffled, not defeated ; we have
driven them back in vain ;
And the columns that were scattered, round
the colours that were tattered,
Toward the sullen, silent fortress turn their
belted breasts again.

All at once, as we are gazing, lo the roofs of
Charlestown blazing !
They have fired the harmless village ; in an
hour it will be down !

The Lord in heaven confound them, rain
His fire and brimstone round them,—
The robbing, murdering red-coats, that
would burn a peaceful town !

They are marching, stern and solemn ; we
can see each massive column
As they near the naked earth-mound with
the slanting walls so steep.
Have our soldiers got faint-hearted, and in
noiseless haste departed ?
Are they panic-struck and helpless ? Are
they palsied or asleep ?

Now ! the walls they're almost under !
scarce a rod the foes asunder !
Not a firelock flashed against them ! up the
earthwork they will swarm !
But the words have scarce been spoken,
when the ominous calm is broken,
And a bellowing crash has emptied all the
vengeance of the storm !

So again, with murderous slaughter, pelted
backwards to the water,
Fly Pigot's running heroes and the fright-
ened braves of Howe ;

And we shout, "At last they're done for,
it's their barges they have run for :
They are beaten, beaten, beaten ; and the
battle's over now !"

And we looked, poor timid creatures, on the
rough old soldier's features,
Our lips afraid to question, but he knew
what we would ask :
"Not sure," he said ; "keep quiet,—once
more, I guess, they'll try it—
Here's damnation to the cut-throats !"—
then he handed me his flask,

Saying, "Gal, you're looking shaky ; have
a drop of old Jamaiky ;
I'm afeard there'll be more trouble afore
the job is done" ;
So I took one scorching swallow ; dreadful
faint I felt and hollow,
Standing there from early morning when
the firing was begun.

All through these hours of trial I had
watched a calm clock dial,
As the hands kept creeping, creeping,—
they were creeping round to four,

When the old man said, "They're forming
with their bagonets fixed for storming:
It's the death-grip that's a-coming,—they
will try the works once more."

With brazen trumpets blaring, the flames
behind them glaring,
The deadly wall before them, in close array
they come;
Still onward, upward toiling, like a dragon's
fold uncoiling,—
Like the rattlesnake's shrill warning the
reverberating drum!

Over heaps all torn and gory—shall I tell
the fearful story,
How they surged above the breastwork, as
a sea breaks over a deck;
How, driven, yet scarce defeated, our worn-
out men retreated,
With their powder-horns all emptied, like
the swimmers from a wreck?

It has all been told and painted; as for me,
they say I fainted,
And the wooden-legged old Corporal stumped
with me down the stair:

When I woke from dreams affrighted the
evening lamps were lighted,—
On the floor a youth was lying ; his bleeding
breast was bare.

And I heard through all the flurry, “ Send
for WARREN ! hurry ! hurry !
Tell him here's a soldier bleeding, and
he'll come and dress his wound ! ”
Ah, we knew not till the morrow told its
tale of death and sorrow,
How the starlight found him stiffened on
the dark and bloody ground.

Who the youth was, what his name was,
where the place from which he came
was,
Who had brought him from the battle, and
had left him at our door,
He could not speak to tell us ; but 'twas
one of our brave fellows,
As the homespun plainly showed us which
the dying soldier wore.

For they all thought he was dying, as they
gathered round him crying,—
And they said, “ Oh, how they'll miss him ! ”
and, “ What *will* his mother do ? ”

Then, his eyelids just unclosing like a child's
that has been dozing,
He faintly murmured, "Mother!"—and—I
saw his eyes were blue.

"Why, grandma, how you're winking!"
Ah, my child, it sets me thinking
Of a story not like this one. Well, he
somehow lived along;
So we came to know each other, and I
nursed him like a—mother,
Till at last he stood before me, tall, and
rosy-cheeked, and strong.

And we sometimes walked together in the
pleasant summer weather,—
"Please to tell us what his name was?"
Just your own, my little dear,—
There's his picture Copley painted: we be-
came so well acquainted,
That—in short, that's why I'm grandma,
and you children all are here!

AT THE "ATLANTIC" DINNER.

DECEMBER 15, 1874.

I SUPPOSE it's myself that you're
making allusion to

And bringing the sense of dismay and confusion to.

Of course *some* must speak,—they are always selected to,

But pray what's the reason that I am expected to?

I'm not fond of wasting my breath as those fellows do

That want to be blowing for ever as bellows do ;

Their legs are uneasy, but why will you jog any

That long to stay quiet beneath the mahogany ?

Why, why call *me* up with your battery of flatteries ?

You say, "He writes poetry,"—that's what the matter is !

"It costs him no trouble—a pen full of ink or two

And the poem is done in the time of a wink or two ;

As for thoughts—never mind—take the
 ones that lie uppermost,
 And the rhymes used by Milton and Byron
 and Tupper most;
 The lines come so easy ! at one end he jingles
 'em,
 At the other with capital letters he shingles
 'em—
 Why, the thing writes itself, and before
 he's half done with it
 He hates to stop writing, he has such good
 fun with it !"

Ah, that is the way in which simple ones
 go about
 And draw a fine picture of things they don't
 know about !
 We all know a kitten, but come to a cata-
 mount
 The beast is a stranger when grown up to
 that amount
 (A stranger we rather prefer shouldn't visit
 us,
 A *felis* whose advent is far from felicitous).
 The boy who can boast that his trap has
 just got a mouse
 Mustn't draw it and write underneath
 "hippopotamus" ;

Or say unveraciously, "This is an elephant,"—

Don't think, let me beg, these examples irrelevant,—

What they mean is just this—that a thing to be painted well

Should always be something with which we're acquainted well.

You call on your victim for "things he has plenty of,—

Those copies of verses no doubt at least twenty of;

His desk is crammed full, for he always keeps writing 'em

And reading to friends as his way of delighting 'em!"

I tell you this writing of verses means business,—

It makes the brain whirl in a vortex of dizziness:

You think they are scrawled in the languor of laziness—

I tell you they're squeezed by a spasm of craziness,

A fit half as bad as the staggering vertigos
That seize a poor fellow and down in the dirt he goes!

And therefore it chimes with the word's
 etymology
 That the sons of Apollo are great on
 apology,
 For the writing of verse is a struggle mys-
 terious
 And the gayest of rhymes is a matter that's
 serious.
 For myself, I'm relied on by friends in
 extremities,
 And I don't mind so much if a comfort to
 them it is ;
 'Tis a pleasure to please, and the straw that
 can tickle us
 Is a source of enjoyment though slightly
 ridiculous.

I am up for a—something—and since I've
 begun with it,
 I must give you a toast now before I have
 done with it,
 Let me pump at my wits as they pumped
 the Cochituate
 That moistened—it may be—the very last
 bit you ate :
 Success to our publishers, authors, and
 editors,—
 To our debtors good luck,—pleasant dreams
 to our creditors ;

May the monthly grow yearly, till all we
are groping for
Has reached the fulfilment we're all of us
hoping for ;
Till the bore through the tunnel—it makes
me let off a sigh
To think it may possibly ruin my prophecy—
Has been punned on so often 'twill never
provoke again
One mild adolescent to make the old joke
again ;
Till abstinent, all-go-to-meeting society
Has forgotten the sense of the word ine-
briety ;
Till the work that poor Hannah and Bridget
and Phillis do
The humanised, civilised female gorillas do ;
Till the roughs, as we call them, grown
loving and dutiful,
Shall worship the true and the pure and the
beautiful,
And, preying no longer as tiger and vulture
do,
All read the "Atlantic" as persons of cul-
ture do !

"LUCY."

FOR HER GOLDEN WEDDING, OCTOBER 18,
1875.

"**L**UCY."—The old familiar name
Is now, as always, pleasant,
Its liquid melody the same
Alike in past or present ;
Let others call you what they will,
I know you 'll let me use it ;
To me your name is Lucy still,
I cannot bear to lose it.

What visions of the past return
With Lucy's image blended !
What memories from the silent urn
Of gentle lives long ended !
What dreams of childhood's fleeting morn
What starry aspirations,
That filled the misty days unborn
With fancy's coruscations !

Ah, Lucy, life has swiftly sped
From April to November ;
The summer blossoms all are shed
That you and I remember ;

But while the vanished years we share
With mingling recollections,
How all their shadowy features wear
The hue of old affections !

Love called you. He who stole your heart
Of sunshine half bereft us ;
Our household's garland fell apart
The morning that you left us ;
The tears of tender girlhood streamed
Through sorrow's opening sluices ;
Less sweet our garden's roses seemed,
Less blue its flower-de-luces.

That old regret is turned to smiles,
That parting sigh to greeting ;
I send my heart-throb fifty miles,—
Through every line 'tis beating ;
God grant you many and happy years,
Till when the last has crowned you
The dawn of endless day appears,
And heaven is shining round you !

October 11, 1875.

HYMN

FOR THE INAUGURATION OF THE STATUE
OF GOVERNOR ANDREW, HINGHAM,

OCTOBER 7, 1875.

BEHOLD the shape our eyes have known !
It lives once more in changeless stone ;
So looked in mortal face and form
Our guide through peril's deadly storm.

But hushed the beating heart we knew,
That heart so tender, brave, and true,
Firm as the rooted mountain rock,
Pure as the quarry's whitest block !

Not his beneath the blood-red star
To win the soldier's envied scar ;
Unarmed he battled for the right,
In Duty's never-ending fight.

Unconquered will, unslumbering eye,
Faith such as bids the martyr die,
The prophet's glance, the master's hand
To mould the work his foresight planned,

These were his gifts ; what Heaven had lent
For justice, mercy, truth, he spent,

First to avenge the traitorous blow,
And first to lift the vanquished foe.

Lo, thus he stood ; in danger's strait
The pilot of the Pilgrim State !
Too large his fame for her alone,—
A nation claims him as her own !

A MEMORIAL TRIBUTE.

READ AT THE MEETING HELD AT MUSIC HALL,
FEBRUARY 8, 1876, IN MEMORY OF
DR. SAMUEL G. HOWE.

I.

LEADER of armies, Israel's God,
Thy soldier's fight is won !
Master, whose lowly path he trod,
Thy servant's work is done !

No voice is heard from Sinai's steep
Our wandering feet to guide ;
From Horeb's rock no waters leap ;
No Jordan's waves divide ;

No prophet cleaves our western sky
On wheels of whirling fire ;
No shepherds hear the song on high
Of heaven's angelic choir :

Yet here as to the patriarch's tent
God's angel comes a guest ;
He comes on heaven's high errand sent,
In earth's poor raiment drest.

We see no halo round his brow
Till love its own recalls,
And, like a leaf that quits the bough,
The mortal vesture falls.

In autumn's chill declining day,
Ere winter's killing frost,
The message came ; so passed away
The friend our earth has lost.

Still, Father, in Thy love we trust ;
Forgive us if we mourn
The saddening hour that laid in dust
His robe of flesh outworn.

II.

How long the wreck-strewn journey seems
To reach the far-off past
That woke his youth from peaceful dreams
With Freedom's trumpet-blast !

Along her classic hillsides rung
The Paynim's battle-cry,
And like a red-cross knight he sprung
For her to live or die.

No trustier service claimed the wreath
For Sparta's bravest son,
No truer soldier sleeps beneath
The mound of Marathon ;

Yet not for him the warrior's grave
In front of angry foes ;
To lift, to shield, to help, to save,
The holier task he chose.

He touched the eyelids of the blind,
And lo ! the veil withdrawn,
As o'er the midnight of the mind
He led the light of dawn.

He asked not whence the fountains roll
No traveller's foot has found,
But mapped the desert of the soul
Untracked by sight or sound.

What prayers have reached the sapphire
throne,
By silent fingers spelt,
For him who first through depths unknown
His doubtful pathway felt,

Who sought the slumbering sense that lay
Close shut with bolt and bar,
And showed awakening thought the ray
Of reason's morning star !

Where'er he moved, his shadowy form
The sightless orbs would seek,
And smiles of welcome light and warm
The lips that could not speak.

No laboured line, no sculptor's art,
Such hallowed memory needs ;
His tablet is the human heart,
His record loving deeds.

III.

The rest that earth denied is thine,—
Ah, is it rest? we ask,
Or, traced by knowledge more divine,
Some larger, nobler task?

Had but those boundless fields of blue
One darkened sphere like this ;
But what has heaven for thee to do
In realms of perfect bliss?

No cloud to lift, no mind to clear,
No rugged path to smooth,
No struggling soul to help and cheer,
No mortal grief to soothe !

Enough ; is there a world of love,
No more we ask to know ;
The hand will guide thy ways above
That shaped thy task below.

JOSEPH WARREN, M.D.

TRAINED in the holy art whose lifted
shield

Wards off the darts a never-slumbering
foe,

By hearth and wayside lurking, waits to
throw,

Oppression taught his helpful arm to wield
The slayer's weapon: on the murderous
field

The fiery bolt he challenged laid him low,
Seeking its noblest victim. Even so

The charter of a nation must be sealed!

The healer's brow the hero's honours
crowned,

From lowliest duty called to loftiest deed.

Living, the oak-leaf wreath his temples
bound;

Dying, the conqueror's laurel was his meed,
Last on the broken ramparts' turf to bleed

Where Freedom's victory in defeat was
found.

June 11, 1875.

OLD CAMBRIDGE.

JULY 3, 1875.

AND can it be you've found a place
Within this consecrated space,
That makes so fine a show,
For one of Rip Van Winkle's race?
And is it really so?
Who wants an old receipted bill?
Who fishes in the Frog-pond still?
Who digs last year's potato hill?—
That's what he'd like to know!

And were it any spot on earth
Save this dear home that gave him birth
Some scores of years ago,
He had not come to spoil your mirth
And chill your festive glow;
But round his baby-nest he strays,
With tearful eye the scene surveys,
His heart unchanged by changing days,—
That's what he'd have you know.

Can you whose eyes not yet are dim
Live o'er the buried past with him,
And see the roses blow
When white-haired men were Joe and Jim
Untouched by winter's snow?

Or roll the years back one by one
As Judah's monarch backed the sun,
And see the century just begun?—
That's what he'd like to know!

I come, but as the swallow dips,
Just touching with her feather-tips
The shining wave below,
To sit with pleasure-murmuring lips
And listen to the flow
Of Elmwood's sparkling Hippocrene,
To tread once more my native green,
To sigh unheard, to smile unseen,—
That's what I'd have you know.

But since the common lot I've shared
(We all are sitting "unprepared,"
Like culprits in a row,
Whose heads are down, whose necks are
bared
To wait the headsman's blow),
I'd like to shift my task to you,
By asking just a thing or two
About the good old times I knew,—
Here's what I want to know:

The yellow meetin'-house—can you tell
Just where it stood before it fell
Prey of the vandal foe,—

Our dear old temple, loved so well,
By ruthless hands laid low?
Where, tell me, was the Deacon's pew?
Whose hair was braided in a queue?
(For there were pig-tails not a few,) —
That's what I'd like to know.

The bell—can you recall its clang?
And how the seats would slam and
bang?
The voices high and low?
The basso's trump before he sang?
The viol and its bow?
Where was it old Judge Winthrop sat?
Who wore the last three-cornered hat?
Was Israel Porter lean or fat?—
That's what I'd like to know.

Tell where the market used to be
That stood beside the murdered tree?
Whose dog to church would go?
Old Marcus Reemie, who was he?
Who were the brothers Snow?
Does not your memory slightly fail
About that great September gale?—
Whereof one told a moving tale,
As Cambridge boys should know.

When Cambridge was a simple town,
Say just when Deacon William Brown
 (Last door in yonder row),
For honest silver counted down,
 His groceries would bestow?—
For those were days when money meant
Something that jingled as you went,—
No hybrid like the nickel cent,
 I'd have you all to know,

But quarter, ninepence, pistareen,
And fourpence-hapennies in between,
 All metal fit to show,
Instead of rags in stagnant green,
 The scum of debts we owe;
How sad to think such stuff should be
Our Wendell's cure-all recipe,—
Not Wendell H., but Wendell P.,—
 The one you all must know!

I question—but you answer not—
Dear me! and have I quite forgot
 How fivescore years ago,
Just on this very blessed spot,
 The summer leaves below,
Before his homespun ranks arrayed
In green New England's elmbough shade
The great Virginian drew the blade
 King George full soon should know!

O George the Third ! you found it true
Our George was more than *double you*,
For nature made him so.
Not much an empire's crown can do
If brains are scant and slow,—
Ah, not like that his laurel crown
Whose presence gilded with renown
Our brave old Academic town,
As all her children know !

So here we meet with loud acclaim
To tell mankind that here he came,
With hearts that throb and glow ;
Ours is a portion of his fame
Our trumpets needs must blow !
On yonder hill the Lion fell,
But here was chipped the eagle's shell,—
That little hatchet did it well,
As all the world shall know !

WELCOME TO THE NATIONS.

PHILADELPHIA, JULY 4, 1876.

BRIGHT on the banners of lily and rose
Lo ! the last sun of our century sets !
Wreathe the black cannon that scowled on
our foes,
All but her friendships the nation forgets !

All but her friends and their welcome
forgets !

These are around her ; but where are her
foes ?

Lo, while the sun of her century sets,
Peace with her garlands of lily and rose !

Welcome ! a shout like the war trumpet's
swell

Wakes the wild echoes that slumber
around !

Welcome ! it quivers from Liberty's bell ;
Welcome ! the walls of her temple re-
sound !

Hark ! the gray walls of her temple re-
sound !

Fade the far voices o'er hillside and dell ;
Welcome ! still whisper the echoes around ;
Welcome ! still trembles on Liberty's bell !

Thrones of the continents ! isles of the
sea !

Yours are the garlands of peace we en-
twine ;

Welcome, once more, to the land of the
free,
Shadowed alike by the palm and the
pine ;

Softly they murmur, the palm and the
pine,
“Hushed is our strife, in the land of the
free”;
Over your children their branches en-
twine,
Thrones of the continents ! isles of the sea !

A FAMILIAR LETTER

TO SEVERAL CORRESPONDENTS.

YES, write, if you want to, there's
nothing like trying ;

Who knows what a treasure your casket
may hold ?

I'll show you that rhyming's as easy as
lying,

If you'll listen to me while the art I
unfold.

Here's a book full of words ; one can choose
as he fancies,

As a painter his tint, as a workman his
tool ;

Just think ! all the poems and plays and
romances

Were drawn out of this, like the fish from
a pool !

You can wander at will through its syllabled
mazes.

And take all you want,—not a copper
they cost,—

What is there to hinder your picking out
phrases

For an epic as clever as “Paradise Lost”?

Don't mind if the index of sense is at zero,
Use words that run smoothly, whatever
they mean ;

Leander and Lilian and Lillibullero

Are much the same thing in the rhyming
machine.

There are words so delicious their sweetness
will smother

That boarding-school flavour of which
we're afraid,—

There is “lush” is a good one, and “swirl”
is another,—

Put both in one stanza, its fortune is made.

With musical murmurs and rhythmical closes
You can cheat us of smiles when you've
nothing to tell ;

You hand us a nosegay of milliner's roses,
And we cry with delight, “Oh, how sweet
they *do* smell !”

Perhaps you will answer all needful conditions
For winning the laurels to which you
aspire,

By docking the tails of the two prepositions
I' the style o' the bards you so greatly
admire.

As for subjects of verse, they are only too
plenty

For ringing the changes on metrical chimes;
A maiden, a moonbeam, a lover of twenty
Have filled that great basket with bushels
of rhymes.

Let me show you a picture—'tis far from
irrelevant—

By a famous old hand in the arts of de-
sign;

'Tis only a photographed sketch of an
elephant,—

The name of the draughtsman was Rem-
brandt of Rhine.

How easy ! no troublesome colours to lay on,
It can't have fatigued him,—no, not in
the least,—

A dash here and there with a hap-hazard
crayon,

And there stands the wrinkled-skinned,
baggy-limbed beast.

Just so with your verse,—'tis as easy as
sketching,—

You can reel off a song without knitting
your brow,

As lightly as Rembrandt a drawing or
etching ;

It is nothing at all, if you only know
how.

Well ; imagine you 've printed your volume
of verses :

Your forehead is wreathed with the gar-
land of fame,

Your poems the eloquent school-boy re-
hearses,

Her album the school-girl presents for
your name ;

Each morning the post brings you autograph
letters ;

You 'll answer them promptly,—an hour
isn't much

For the honour of sharing a page with your
betters,

With magistrates, members of Congress,
and such.

Of course you're delighted to serve the committees

That come with requests from the country
all round,

You would grace the occasion with poems
and ditties

When they've got a new schoolhouse, or
poorhouse, or pound.

With a hymn for the saints and a song for
the sinners,

You go and are welcome wherever you
please ;

You're a privileged guest at all manner of
dinners,

You've a seat on the platform among the
grandees.

At length your mere presence becomes a
sensation,

Your cup of enjoyment is filled to its
brim

With the pleasure Horatian of digitmon-
stration,

As the whisper runs round of "That's
he !" or "That's him !"

But remember, O dealer in phrases sonorous,
So daintily chosen, so tunefully matched,
Though you soar with the wings of the
cherubim o'er us,
The *ovum* was human from which you
were hatched.

No will of your own with its puny compul-
sion
Can summon the spirit that quickens the
lyre ;
It comes, if at all, like the Sibyl's convulsion
And touches the brain with a finger of fire.

So perhaps, after all, it's as well to be quiet,
If you've nothing you think is worth say-
ing in prose,
As to furnish a meal of their cannibal diet
To the critics, by publishing, as you pro-
pose.

But it's all of no use, and I'm sorry I've
written,—
I shall see your thin volume some day on
my shelf ;
For the rhyming tarantula surely has bitten,
And music must cure you, so pipe it your-
self.

UNSATISFIED.

“ONLY a housemaid !” She looked from
the kitchen,—

Neat was the kitchen and tidy was she ;
There at her window a sempstress sat stitch-
ing ;

“Were I a sempstress, how happy I’d
be !”

“Only a Queen !” She looked over the
waters,—

Fair was her kingdom and mighty was
she ;

There sat an Empress, with Queens for her
daughters ;

“Were I an Empress, how happy I’d
be !”

Still the old frailty they all of them trip in !

Eve in her daughters is ever the same ;

Give her all Eden, she sighs for a pippin ;

Give her an Empire, she pines for a name !

May 8, 1876.

HOW THE OLD HORSE WON THE
BET.

DEDICATED BY A CONTRIBUTOR TO THE "COL-
LEGIAN," 1830, TO THE EDITORS OF THE
"HARVARD ADVOCATE," 1876.

'T WAS on the famous trotting-ground,
The betting men were gathered round
From far and near; the "cracks" were
there

Whose deeds the sporting prints declare :
The swift g. m., Old Hiram's nag,
The fleet s. h., Dan Pfeiffer's brag,
With these a third—and who is he
That stands beside his fast b. g. ?
Budd Doble, whose catarrhal name
So fills the nasal trump of fame.
There too stood many a noted steed
Of Messenger and Morgan breed ;
Green horses also, not a few ;
Unknown as yet what they could do ;
And all the hacks that know so well
The scourgings of the Sunday swell.

Blue are the skies of opening day ;
The bordering turf is green with May ;
The sunshine's golden gleam is thrown
On sorrel, chestnut, bay, and roan ;

The horses paw and prance and neigh,
 Fillies and colts like kittens play,
 And dance and toss their rippled manes
 Shining and soft as silken skeins ;
 Wagons and gigs are ranged about,
 And fashion flaunts her gay turn-out ;
 Here stands—each youthful Jehu's dream—
 The jointed tandem, ticklish team !
 And there in ampler breadth expand
 The splendours of the four-in-hand ;
 On faultless ties and glossy tiles
 The lovely bonnets beam their smiles
 (The style's the man, so books avow ;
 The style's the woman, anyhow) ;
 From flounces frothed with creamy lace
 Peeps out the pug-dog's smutty face,
 Or spaniel rolls his liquid eye,
 Or stares the wiry pet of Skye,—
 O woman, in your hours of ease
 So shy with us, so free with these !

“Come on ! I'll bet you two to one
 I'll make him do it !” “Will you ? Done !”

What was it who was bound to do ?
 I did not hear and can't tell you,—
 Pray listen till my story's through.

Scarce noticed, back behind the rest,
 By cart and wagon rudely prest,
 The Parson's lean and bony bay
 Stood harnessed in his one-horse shay—
 Lent to his sexton for the day
 (A funeral—so the sexton said ;
 His mother's uncle's wife was dead).

Like Lazarus bid to Dives' feast,
 So looked the poor forlorn old beast ;
 His coat was rough, his tail was bare,
 The gray was sprinkled in his hair ;
 Sportsmen and jockeys knew him not,
 And yet they say he once could trot
 Among the fleetest of the town,
 Till something cracked and broke him
 down,—

The steed's, the statesman's, common lot !
 "And are we then so soon forgot ?"
 Ah me ! I doubt if one of you
 Has ever heard the name "Old Blue,"
 Whose fame through all this region rung
 In those old days when I was young !

"Bring forth the horse !" Alas ! he showed
 Not like the one Mazeppa rode ;
 Scant-maned, sharp-backed, and shaky-
 kneed,
 The wreck of what was once a steed,

Lips thin, eyes hollow, stiff in joints ;
Yet not without his knowing points.
The sexton laughing in his sleeve,
As if 'twere all a make-believe,
Led forth the horse, and as he laughed
Unhitched the breeching from a shaft,
Unclasped the rusty belt beneath,
Drew forth the snaffle from his teeth,
Slipped off his head-stall, set him free
From strap and rein,—a sight to see !

So worn, so lean in every limb,
It can't be they are saddling him !
It is ! his back the pig-skin strides
And flaps his lank, rheumatic sides ;
With look of mingled scorn and mirth
They buckle round the saddle-girth ;
With horsey wink and saucy toss
A youngster throws his leg across,
And so, his rider on his back,
They lead him, limping, to the track,
Far up behind the starting-point,
To limber out each stiffened joint.

As through the jeering crowd he past,
One pitying look Old Hiram cast ;
“ Go it, ye cripple, while ye can ! ”
Cried out unsentimental Dan ;

“A Fast-day dinner for the crows !”
 Budd Doble’s scoffing shout arose.

Slowly, as when the walking-beam
 First feels the gathering head of steam
 With warning cough and threatening wheeze
 The stiff old charger crooks his knees ;
 At first with cautious step sedate,
 As if he dragged a coach of state ;
 He’s not a colt ; he knows full well
 That time is weight and sure to tell ;
 No horse so sturdy but he fears
 The handicap of twenty years.
 As through the throng on either hand
 The old horse nears the judges’ stand,
 Beneath his jockey’s feather-weight
 He warms a little to his gait,
 And now and then a step is tried
 That hints of something like a stride.

“Go !”—Through his ear the summons
 stung
 As if a battle-trump had rung ;
 The slumbering instincts long unstirred
 Start at the old familiar word ;
 It thrills like flame through every limb,—
 What mean his twenty years to him ?

The savage blow his rider dealt
Fell on his hollow flanks unfelt ;
The spur that pricked his staring hide
Unheeded tore his bleeding side ;
Alike to him are spur and rein,—
He steps a five-year-old again !

Before the quarter pole was past,
Old Hiram said, “ He ’s going fast.”
Long ere the quarter was a half,
The chuckling crowd had ceased to laugh ;
Tighter his frightened jockey clung
As in a mighty stride he swung,
The gravel flying in his track,
His neck stretched out, his ears laid back,
His tail extended all the while
Behind him like a rat-tail file !
Off went a shoe,—away it spun,
Shot like a bullet from a gun ;
The quaking jockey shapes a prayer
From scraps of oaths he used to swear ;
He drops his whip, he drops his rein,
He clutches fiercely for a mane ;
He ’ll lose his hold—he sways and reels—
He ’ll slide beneath those trampling heels !
The knees of many a horseman quake,
The flowers on many a bonnet shake,

And shouts arise from left and right,
 "Stick on! Stick on!" "Hould tight!
 Hould tight!"

"Cling round his neck and don't let go—
 "That pace can't hold—there! steady!
 whoa!"

But like the sable steed that bore
 The spectral lover of Lenore,
 His nostrils snorting foam and fire,
 No stretch his bony limbs can tire;
 And now the stand he rushes by,
 And "Stop him!—stop him!" is the cry.
 Stand back! he's only just begun—
 He's having out three heats in one!

"Don't rush in front! he'll smash your
 brains;

But follow up and grab the reins!"
 Old Hiram spoke. Dan Pfeiffer heard,
 And sprang impatient at the word;
 Budd Doble started on his bay,
 Old Hiram followed on his gray,
 And off they spring, and round they go,
 The fast ones doing "all they know."
 Look! twice they follow at his heels,
 As round the circling course he wheels,
 And whirls with him that clinging boy
 Like Hector round the walls of Troy;

Still on, and on, the third time round !
 They're tailing off ! they're losing ground !
 Budd Doble's nag begins to fail !
 Dan Pfeiffer's sorrel whisks his tail !
 And see ! in spite of whip and shout,
 Old Hiram's mare is giving out !
 Now for the finish ! at the turn,
 The old horse—all the rest astern—
 Comes swinging in, with easy trot ;
 By Jove ! he's distanced all the lot !

That trot no mortal could explain ;
 Some said, " Old Dutchman come again !"
 Some took his time,—at least they tried,
 But what it was could none decide ;
 One said he couldn't understand
 What happened to his second hand ;
 One said 2.10 ; *that* couldn't be—
 More like two twenty-two or three ;
 Old Hiram settled it at last ;
 " The time was two—too dee-vel-ish fast ! "

The parson's horse had won the bet ;
 It cost him something of a sweat ;
 Back in the one-horse shay he went ;
 The parson wondered what it meant,
 And murmured, with a mild surprise
 And pleasant twinkle of the eyes,

“That funeral must have been a trick,
Or corpses drive at double-quick ;
I shouldn’t wonder, I declare,
If brother—Jehu—made the prayer !”

And this is all I have to say
About that tough old trotting bay,
Huddup ! Huddup ! G’lang ! Good-day !

Moral for which this tale is told :
A horse *can* trot, for all he’s old.

AN APPEAL FOR “THE OLD SOUTH.”

“While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand ;
When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall.”

FULL sevenscore years our city’s pride—
The comely Southern spire—
Has cast its shadow, and defied
The storm, the foe, the fire ;
Sad is the sight our eyes behold ;
Woe to the three-hilled town,
When through the land the tale is told—
“The brave ‘Old South’ is down !”

Let darkness blot the starless dawn
 That hears our children tell,
 "Here rose the walls, now wrecked and
 gone,
 Our fathers loved so well ;
 Here, while his brethren stood aloof,
 The herald's blast was blown
 That shook St. Stephen's pillared roof
 And rocked King George's throne !

"The home-bound wanderer of the main
 Looked from his deck afar,
 To where the gilded, glittering vane
 Shone like the evening star,
 And pilgrim feet from every clime
 The floor with reverence trod,
 Where holy memories made sublime
 The shrine of Freedom's God !"

The darkened skies, alas ! have seen
 Our monarch tree laid low,
 And spread in ruins o'er the green,
 But Nature struck the blow ;
 No scheming thrift its downfall planned,
 It felt no edge of steel,
 No soulless hireling raised his hand
 The deadly stroke to deal.

In bridal garlands, pale and mute,
 Still pleads the storied tower ;
 These are the blossoms, but the fruit
 Awaits the golden shower ;
 The spire still greets the morning sun,—
 Say, shall it stand or fall ?
 Help, ere the spoiler has begun !
 Help, each, and God help all !

THE FIRST FAN.

READ AT A MEETING OF THE BOSTON BRIC-À-
 BRAC CLUB, FEBRUARY 21, 1877.

WHEN rose the cry "Great Pan is dead !"
 And Jove's high palace closed its
 portal,
 The fallen gods, before they fled,
 Sold out their frippery to a mortal.

"To whom ?" you ask. I ask of you.
 The answer hardly needs suggestion ;
 Of course it was the Wandering Jew,—
 How could you put me such a question ?

A purple robe, a little worn,
 The Thunderer deigned himself to offer ;
 The bearded wanderer laughed in scorn,—
 You know he always was a scoffer.

“Vife shillins ! ’tis a monstrous price ;
Say two-and-six and further talk shun.”
“Take it,” cried Jove ; “ we can’t be nice,—
’Twould fetch twice that at Leonard’s
auction.”

The ice was broken ; up they came,
All sharp for bargains, god and goddess,
Each ready with the price to name
For robe or head-dress, scarf or bodice.

First Juno, out of temper, too,—
Her queenly forehead somewhat cloudy ;
Then Pallas in her stockings blue,
Imposing, but a little dowdy.

The scowling queen of heaven unrolled
Before the Jew a threadbare turban :
“Three shillings.” “One. ’Twill suit
some old
Terrific feminine suburban.”

But as for Pallas,—how to tell
In seemly phrase a fact so shocking ?
She pointed,—pray excuse me,—well,
She pointed to her azure stocking.

And if the honest truth were told,
Its heel confessed the need of darning ;
“ Gods ! ” low-bred Vulcan cried, “ behold !
There ! that ’s what comes of too much
larning ! ”

Pale Proserpine came groping round,
Her pupils dreadfully dilated
With too much living underground,—
A residence quite overrated ;

“ This kerchief ’s what you want, I know,—
Don’t cheat poor Venus of her cestus,—
You ’ll find it handy when you go
To—you know where ; it ’s pure asbestus. ”

Then Phœbus of the silver bow,
And Hebe, dimpled as a baby,
And Dian with the breast of snow,
Chaser and chased—and caught, it may
be :

One took the quiver from her back,
One held the cap he had spent the night in,
And one a bit of *bric-à-brac*,
Such as the gods themselves delight in.

Then Mars, the foe of human kind,
 Strode up and showed his suit of armour ;
So none at last was left behind
 Save Venus, the celestial charmer.

Poor Venus ! What had she to sell ?
 For all she looked so fresh and jaunty,
Her wardrobe, as I blush to tell,
 Already seemed but quite too scanty.

Her gems were sold, her sandals gone,—
 She always would be rash and flighty,—
Her winter garments all in pawn,
 Alas for charming Aphrodite !

The lady of a thousand loves,
 The darling of the old religion,
Had only left of all the doves
 That drew her car one fan-tailed pigeon.

How oft upon her finger-tips
 He perched, afraid of Cupid's arrow,
Or kissed her on the rosebud lips,
 Like Roman Lesbia's loving sparrow !

“ My bird, I want your train,” she cried ;
 “ Come, don't let's have a fuss about it ;
I'll make it beauty's pet and pride,
 And you 'll be better off without it.

“ So vulgar ! Have you noticed, pray,
An earthly belle or dashing bride walk,
And how her flounces track her way,
Like slimy serpents on the sidewalk ?

“ A lover’s heart it quickly cools ;
In mine it kindles up enough rage
To wring their necks. How can such fools
Ask men to vote for woman suffrage ? ”

The goddess spoke, and gently stripped
Her bird of every caudal feather ;
A strand of gold-bright hair she clipped,
And bound the glossy plumes together,

And lo, the Fan ! for beauty’s hand,
The lovely queen of beauty made it ;
The price she named was hard to stand,
But Venus smiled : the Hebrew paid it.

Jove, Juno, Venus, where are you ?
Mars, Mercury, Phœbus, Neptune, Saturn ?
But o’er the world the Wandering Jew
Has borne the Fan’s celestial pattern.

So everywhere we find the Fan,—
In lonely isles of the Pacific,
In farthest China and Japan,—
Wherever suns are sudorific.

Nay, even the oily Esquimaux
In summer court its cooling breezes—
In fact, in every clime 'tis so,
No matter if it fries or freezes.

And since from Aphrodite's dove
The pattern of the fan was given,
No wonder that it breathes of love
And wafts the perfumed gales of heaven !

Before this new Pandora's gift
In slavery woman's tyrant kept her,
But now he kneels her glove to lift,—
The fan is mightier than the sceptre.

The tap it gives how arch and sly !
The breath it wakes how fresh and grateful !
Behind its shield how soft the sigh !
The whispered tale of shame how fateful !

Its empire shadows every throne
And every shore that man is tost on ;
It rules the lords of every zone,
Nay, even the bluest blood of Boston !

But every one that swings to-night,
Of fairest shape, from farthest region,
May trace its pedigree aright
To Aphrodite's fan-tailed pigeon.

TO R. B. H.

AT THE DINNER TO THE PRESIDENT, BOSTON,
JUNE 26, 1877.

HOW to address him? awkward, it is
true :

Call him "Great Father," as the Red Men
do.

Borrow some title? this is not the place
That christens men Your Highness and Your
Grace ;

We tried such names as these awhile, you
know,

But left them off a century ago.

His Majesty? We've had enough of that :
Besides, that needs a crown; he wears a
hat.

What if, to make the nicer ears content,
We say His Honesty, the President?

Sir, we believed you honest, truthful, brave,
When to your hands their precious trust we
gave,

And we have found you better than we knew,
Braver, and not less honest, not less true !

So every heart has opened, every hand
Tingles with welcome, and through all the
land
All voices greet you in one broad acclaim,
Healer of strife ! Has earth a nobler name?

What phrases mean you do not need to learn ;
We must be civil, and they serve our turn :
“ Your most obedient humble ” means—
means what ?
Something the well-bred signer just is not.

Yet there are tokens, sir, you must believe ;
There is one language never can deceive :
The lover knew it when the maiden smiled ;
The mother knows it when she clasps her
child ;
Voices may falter, trembling lips turn pale,
Words grope and stumble ; this will tell
their tale
Shorn of all rhetoric, bare of all pretence,
But radiant, warm, with Nature's eloquence.
Look in our eyes ! Your welcome waits you
there,—
North, South, East, West, from all and
everywhere !

THE SHIP OF STATE.

A SENTIMENT.

This "sentiment" was read on the same occasion as the "Family Record," which immediately follows it. The latter poem is the dutiful tribute of a son to his father and his father's ancestors, residents of Woodstock from its first settlement.

THE Ship of State ! above her skies are
blue,
But still she rocks a little, it is true,
And there *are* passengers whose faces white
Show they don't feel as happy as they
might ;
Yet on the whole her crew are quite
content,
Since its wild fury the typhoon has spent,
And willing, if her pilot thinks it best,
To head a little nearer south by west.
And this they feel : the ship came too near
wreck,
In the long quarrel for the quarter-deck,
Now when she glides serenely on her way,—
The shallows past where dread explosives
lay,—
The stiff obstructive's churlish game to
try :
Let sleeping dogs and still torpedoes lie !

And so I give you all the Ship of State ;
Freedom's last venture is her priceless
freight ;
God speed her, keep her, bless her, while
she steers
Amid the breakers of unsounded years ;
Lead her through danger's paths with even
keel,
And guide the honest hand that holds her
wheel !

WOODSTOCK, CONN., July 4, 1877.

A FAMILY RECORD.

WOODSTOCK, CONN., JULY 4, 1877.

NOT to myself this breath of vesper
song,
Not to these patient friends, this kindly
throng,
Not to this hallowed morning, though it
be
Our summer Christmas, Freedom's jubilee,
When every summit, topmast, steeple,
tower,
That owns her empire spreads her starry
flower,

Its blood-streaked leaves in heaven's ben-
ignant dew

Washed clean from every crimson stain they
knew,—

No, not to these the passing thrills belong
That steal my breath to hush themselves
with song.

These moments all are memory's; I have
come

To speak with lips that rather should be
dumb;

For what are words? At every step I
tread

The dust that wore the footprints of the
dead

But for whose life my life had never
known

This faded vesture which it calls its own.

Here sleeps my father's sire, and they who
gave

That earlier life here found their peaceful
grave.

In days gone by I sought the hallowed
ground;

Climbed yon long slope; the sacred spot I
found

Where all unsullied lies the winter snow,

Where all ungathered spring's pale violets
blow,

And tracked from stone to stone the Saxon
name

That marks the blood I need not blush to
claim,

Blood such as warmed the Pilgrim sons of toil,
Who held from God the charter of the soil.

I came an alien to your hills and plains,
Yet feel your birthright tingling in my veins;
Mine are this changing prospect's sun and
shade,

In full-blown summer's bridal pomp arrayed;
Mine these fair hillsides and the vales be-
tween;

Mine the sweet streams that lend their
brightening green;

I breathed your air—the sunlit landscape
smiled;

I touch your soil—it knows its children's
child;

Throned in my heart your heritage is mine;
I claim it all by memory's right divine!

Waking, I dream. Before my vacant eyes
In long procession shadowy forms arise;
Far through the vista of the silent years
I see a venturous band; the pioneers,
Who let the sunlight through the forest's
gloom,

Who bade the harvest wave, the garden
bloom.

Hark ! loud resounds the bare-armed
settler's axe,—

See where the stealthy panther left his
tracks !

As fierce, as stealthy creeps the skulking foe
With stone-tipped shaft and sinew-corded
bow ;

Soon shall he vanish from his ancient reign,
Leave his last cornfield to the coming train,
Quit the green margin of the wave he drinks,
For haunts that hide the wild-cat and the
lynx.

But who the Youth his glistening axe
that swings
To smite the pine that shows a hundred
rings ?

His features ?—something in his look I find
That calls the semblance of my race to mind.
His name ?—my own ; and that which goes
before

The same that once the loved disciple bore.
Young, brave, discreet, the father of a line
Whose voiceless lives have found a voice in
mine ;

Thinned by unnumbered currents though
they be,
Thanks for the ruddy drops I claim from
thee !

The seasons pass ; the roses come and go ;
Snows fall and melt ; the waters freeze and
flow ;

The boys are men ; the girls, grown tall and
fair,

Have found their mates ; a gravestone here
and there

Tells where the fathers lie ; the silvered hair
Of some bent patriarch yet recalls the time
That saw his feet the northern hillside
climb,

A pilgrim from the pilgrims far away,

The godly men, the dwellers by the bay.

On many a hearthstone burns the cheerful
fire ;

The schoolhouse porch, the heavenward
pointing spire

Proclaim in letters every eye can read,

Knowledge and Faith, the new world's
simple creed.

Hush ! 'tis the Sabbath's silence-stricken
morn :

No feet must wander through the tasselled
corn ;

No merry children laugh around the door,

No idle playthings strew the sanded floor ;

The law of Moses lays its awful ban

On all that stirs ; here comes the tithing-
man !

At last the solemn hour of worship calls ;
Slowly they gather in the sacred walls ;
Man in his strength and age with knotted
 staff,
And boyhood aching for its week-day laugh,
The toil-worn mother with the child she
 leads,
The maiden, lovely in her golden beads,—
The popish symbols round her neck she
 wears,
But on them counts her lovers, not her
 prayers,—
Those youths in homespun suits and rib-
 boned queues,
Whose hearts are beating in the high-backed
 pews.
The pastor rises ; looks along the seats
With searching eye ; each wonted face he
 meets ;
Asks heavenly guidance ; finds the chapter's
 place
That tells some tale of Israel's stubborn
 race ;
Gives out the sacred song ; all voices join,
For no *quartette* extorts their scanty coin ;
Then while both hands their black-gloved
 palms display,
Lifts his gray head, and murmurs, " Let us
 pray ! "

And pray he does ! as one that never fears
To plead unanswered by the God that hears ;
What if he dwells on many a fact as though
Some things Heaven knew not which it
ought to know,—

Thanks God for all His favours past, and yet,
Tells Him there's something He must not
forget ;

Such are the prayers his people love to
hear,—

See how the Deacon slants his listening ear !
What ! look once more ! Nay, surely
there I trace

The hinted outlines of a well-known face !
Not those the lips for laughter to beguile,
Yet round their corners lurks an embryo
smile,

The same on other lips my childhood knew
That scarce the Sabbath's mastery could
subdue.

Him too my lineage gives me leave to
claim,—

The good, grave man that bears the Psalmist's
name.

And still in ceaseless round the seasons
passed ;
Spring piped her carol ; Autumn blew his
blast ;

Babes waxed to manhood ; manhood shrunk
to age ;

Life's worn-out players tottered off the stage ;
The few are many ; boys have grown to men
Since Putnam dragged the wolf from Pom-
fret's den ;

Our new-old Woodstock is a thriving town ;
Brave are her children ; faithful to the
crown ;

Her soldiers' steel the savage redskin knows ;
Their blood has crimsoned his Canadian
snows.

And now once more along the quiet vale
Rings the dread call that turns the mothers
pale ;

Full well they know the valorous heat that
runs

In every pulse-beat of their loyal sons ;
Who would not bleed in good King George's
cause

When England's lion shows his teeth and
claws ?

With glittering firelocks on the village
green

In proud array a martial band is seen ;
You know what names those ancient rosters
hold,—

Whose belts were buckled when the drum-
beat rolled,—

But mark their Captain! tell us, who is he?
On his brown face that same old look I see!
Yes! from the homestead's still retreat he
came,

Whose peaceful owner bore the Psalmist's
name;

The same his own. Well, Israel's glorious
king

Who struck the harp could also whirl the
sling,—

Breathe in his song a penitential sigh
And smite the sons of Amalek hip and
thigh:

These shared their task; one deaconed out
the psalm,

One slashed the scalping hell-hounds of
Montcalm;

The praying father's pious work is done,
Now sword in hand steps forth the fighting
son.

On many a field he fought in wilds afar;
See on his swarthy cheek the bullet's scar!
There hangs a murderous tomahawk; be-
neath,

Without its blade, a knife's embroidered
sheath;

Save for the stroke his trusty weapon dealt
His scalp had dangled at their owner's
belt:

But not for him such fate ; he lived to see
The bloodier strife that made our nation
free,

To serve with willing toil, with skilful hand,
The war-worn saviours of the bleeding land.
His wasting life to others' needs he gave,—
Sought rest in home and found it in the
grave.

See where the stones life's brief memorials
keep,

The tablet telling where he "fell on sleep,"—
Watched by a winged cherub's rayless eye,—
A scroll above that says we all must die,—
Those saddening lines beneath, the "Night-
Thoughts" lent :

So stands the Soldier's, Surgeon's monument.
Ah ! at a glance my filial eye divines
The scholar son in those remembered lines.

The Scholar Son. His hand my footsteps
led.

No more the dim unreal past I tread.

O thou whose breathing form was once so
dear,

Whose cheering voice was music to my ear,
Art thou not with me as my feet pursue
The village paths so well thy boyhood
knew,

Along the tangled margin of the stream
Whose murmurs blended with thine infant
 dream,
Or climb the hill, or thread the wooded
 vale,
Or seek the wave where gleams yon distant
 sail,
Or the old homestead's narrowed bounds
 explore,
Where sloped the roof that sheds the rains
 no more,
Where one last relic still remains to tell
Here stood thy home,—the memory-haunted
 well,
Whose waters quench a deeper thirst than
 thine,
Changed at my lips to sacramental wine,—
Art thou not with me, as I fondly trace
The scanty records of thine honoured race,
Call up the forms that earlier years have
 known,
And spell the legend of each slanted
 stone?
 With thoughts of thee my loving verse
 began,
Not for the critic's curious eye to scan,
Not for the many listeners, but the few
Whose fathers trod the paths my fathers
 knew;

Still in my heart thy loved remembrance
burns ;

Still to my lips thy cherished name returns ;
Could I but feel thy gracious presence near
Amid the groves that once to thee were dear !
Could but my trembling lips with mortal
speech

Thy listening ear for one brief moment
reach !

How vain the dream ! The pallid voyager's
track

No sign betrays ; he sends no message back.
No word from thee since evening's shadow
fell

On thy cold forehead with my long fare-
well,—

Now from the margin of the silent sea,
Take my last offering ere I cross to thee !

THE IRON GATE

AND OTHER POEMS.

1877-1881.



THE IRON GATE.

Read at the breakfast given in honour of Dr. Holmes's Seventieth Birthday by the publishers of the "Atlantic Monthly," Boston, December 3, 1879.

WHERE is this patriarch you are kindly
greeting?

Not unfamiliar to my ear his name,
Nor yet unknown to many a joyous meeting
In days long vanished,—is he still the
same,

Or changed by years, forgotten and forgetting,
Dull-eared, dim-sighted, slow of speech
and thought,
Still o'er the sad, degenerate present fretting,
Where all goes wrong, and nothing as it
ought?

Old age, the graybeard ! Well, indeed, I
know him,—

Shrunk, tottering, bent, of aches and ills
the prey ;

In sermon, story, fable, picture, poem,
Oft have I met him from my earliest day :

In my old Æsop, toiling with his bundle,—
His load of sticks,—politely asking Death,
Who comes when called for,—would he lug
or trundle

His fagot for him?—he was scant of
breath.

And, sad “ Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher,”—
Has he not stamped the image on my soul,
In that last chapter, where the worn-out
Teacher

Sighs o’er the loosened cord, the broken
bowl ?

Yes, long, indeed, I’ve known him at a
distance,

And now my lifted door-latch shows him
here ;

I take his shrivelled hand without resistance,
And find him smiling as his step draws
near.

What though of gilded baubles he bereaves us,
Dear to the heart of youth, to manhood's
prime ;
Think of the calm he brings, the wealth he
leaves us,
The hoarded spoils, the legacies of time !

Altars once flaming, still with incense fra-
grant,
Passion's uneasy nurslings rocked asleep,
Hope's anchor faster, wild desire less vagrant,
Life's flow less noisy, but the stream how
deep !

Still as the silver cord gets worn and slender,
Its lightened task-work tugs with lessen-
ing strain,
Hands get more helpful, voices, grown more
tender,
Soothe with their softened tones the
slumberous brain.

Youth longs and manhood strives, but age
remembers,
Sits by the raked-up ashes of the past,
Spreads its thin hands above the whitening
embers
That warm its creeping life-blood till the
last.

Dear to its heart is every loving token
That comes unbidden ere its pulse grows
cold,
Ere the last lingering ties of life are broken,
Its labours ended and its story told.

Ah, while around us rosy youth rejoices,
For us the sorrow-laden breezes sigh,
And through the chorus of its jocund
voices
Throbs the sharp note of misery's hopeless
cry.

As on the gauzy wings of fancy flying
From some far orb I track our watery
sphere,
Home of the struggling, suffering, doubting,
dying,
The silvered globule seems a glistening
tear.

But Nature lends her mirror of illusion
To win from saddening scenes our age-
dimmed eyes,
And misty day-dreams blend in sweet
confusion
The wintry landscape and the summer
skies.

So when the iron portal shuts behind us,
And life forgets us in its noise and whirl,
Visions that shunned the glaring noonday
find us,
And glimmering starlight shows the gates
of pearl.

I come not here your morning hour to
sadden,
A limping pilgrim, leaning on his staff,—
I, who have never deemed it sin to gladden
This vale of sorrows with a wholesome
laugh.

If word of mine another's gloom has
brightened,
Through my dumb lips the heaven-sent
message came ;
If hand of mine another's task has
lightened,
It felt the guidance that it dares not claim.

But, O my gentle sisters, O my brothers,
These thick-sown snow-flakes hint of toil's
release ;
These feeble pulses bid me leave to others
The tasks once welcome ; evening asks
for peace.

Time claims his tribute; silence now is
golden;

Let me not vex the too long suffering lyre;
Though to your love untiring still beholden,
The curfew tells me—cover up the fire.

And now with grateful smile and accents
cheerful,

And warmer heart than look or word can
tell,

In simplest phrase—these traitorous eyes
are tearful—

Thanks, Brothers, Sisters,—Children,—
and farewell !

VESTIGIA QUINQUE RETRORSUM.

AN ACADEMIC POEM.

1829-1879.

Read at the Commencement Dinner of the Alumni
of Harvard University, June 25, 1879.

WHILE fond, sad memories all around
us throng,

Silence were sweeter than the sweetest
song;

Yet when the leaves are green and heaven
is blue,

The choral tribute of the grove is due,

And when the lengthening nights have
 chilled the skies,
 We fain would hear the song-bird ere he
 flies,
 And greet with kindly welcome, even as
 now,
 The lonely minstrel on his leafless bough.

This is our golden year,—its golden day ;
 Its bridal memories soon must pass away ;
 Soon shall its dying music cease to ring,
 And every year must loose some silver
 string,
 Till the last trembling chords no longer
 thrill,—
 Hands all at rest and hearts forever still.

A few gray heads have joined the forming
 line ;
 We hear our summons,—“ Class of ’Twenty-
 Nine ! ”
 Close on the foremost, and, alas, how few !
 Are these “ The Boys ” our dear old Mother
 knew ?
 Sixty braveswimmers. Twenty—something
 more—
 Have passed the stream and reached this
 frosty shore !

How near the banks these fifty years
 divide
 When memory crosses with a single stride !
 'Tis the first year of stern " Old Hickorys' "
 rule
 When our good Mother lets us out of school,
 Half glad, half sorrowing, it must be con-
 fessed,
 To leave her quiet lap, her bounteous breast,
 Armed with our dainty, ribbon-tied degrees,
 Pleased and yet pensive, exiles and A.B.'s.

Look back, O comrades, with your faded
 eyes,
 And see the phantoms as I bid them rise.
 Whose smile is that? Its pattern Nature
 gave,
 A sunbeam dancing in a dimpled wave ;
 KIRKLAND alone such grace from Heaven
 could win,
 His features radiant as the soul within ;
 That smile would let him through Saint
 Peter's gate
 While sad-eyed martyrs had to stand and
 wait.
 Here flits mercurial *Farrar* : standing
 there,
 See mild, benignant, cautious, learned *Ware*,

And sturdy, patient, faithful, honest *Hedge*,
 Whose grinding logic gave our wits their
 edge ;

Ticknor, with honeyed voice and courtly
 grace ;

And *Willard*, larynxed like a double bass ;
 And *Channing*, with his bland, superior
 look,

Cool as a moonbeam on a frozen brook,
 While the pale student, shivering in his
 shoes,

Sees from his theme the turgid rhetoric ooze ;
 And the born soldier, fate decreed to wreak
 His martial manhood on a class in Greek,

Popkin ! How that explosive name recalls
 The grand old Busby of our ancient halls !
 Such faces looked from Skippon's grim
 platoons,

Such figures rode with Ireton's stout
 dragoons ;

He gave his strength to learning's gentle
 charms,

But every accent sounded "Shoulder arms !"

Names,—empty names ! Save only here
 and there

Some white-haired listener, dozing in his
 chair,

Starts at the sound he often used to hear,
And upward slants his Sunday-sermon ear.

And we—our blooming manhood we
regain ;
Smiling we join the long Commencement
train,
One point first battled in discussion hot,—
Shall we wear gowns? and settled : *We will
not.*
How strange the scene,—that noisy boy-
debate
Where embryo-speakers learn to rule the
State !
This broad-browed youth, sedate and sober-
eyed,
Shall wear the ermined robe at Taney's side ;
And he, the stripling, smooth of face and
slight,
Whose slender form scarce intercepts the
light,
Shall rule the Bench where Parsons gave
the law,
And sphinx-like sat uncouth, majestic Shaw !
Ah, many a star has shed its fatal ray
On names we loved—our brothers—where
are they ?
Nor these alone ; our hearts in silence claim
Names not less dear, unsyllabled by fame.

How brief the space ! and yet it sweeps
 us back
 Far, far along our new-born history's
 track !
 Five strides like this ;—the sachem rules
 the land ;
 The Indian wigwams cluster where we
 stand.

The second. Lo ! a scene of deadly
 strife—
 A nation struggling into infant life ;
 Not yet the fatal game at Yorktown won
 Where failing Empire fired its sunset gun.
 LANGDON sits restless in the ancient chair,—
 Harvard's grave Head,—these echoes heard
 his prayer
 When from yon mansion, dear to memory
 still,
 The banded yeomen marched for Bunker's
 Hill.
 Count on the grave triennial's thick-starred
 roll
 What names were numbered on the length-
 ening scroll,—
 Not unfamiliar in our ears they ring,—
 Winthrop, Hale, Eliot, Everett, Dexter,
 Tyng.

Another stride. Once more at 'twenty-nine,—

GOD SAVE KING GEORGE, the Second of his line !

And is *Sir Isaac* living ? Nay, not so,—
He followed *Flamsteed* two short years ago,—

And what about the little hump-backed man

Who pleased the bygone days of good Queen Anne ?

What, *Pope* ? another book he's just put out,—

“The Dunciad,”—witty, but profane, no doubt.

Where's *Cotton Mather* ? he was always here.

And so he would be, but he died last year.

Who is this preacher our Northampton claims,

Whose rhetoric blazes with sulphureous flames

And torches stolen from Tartarean mines ?

Edwards, the salamander of divines.

A deep, strong nature, pure and undefiled ;
Faith, firm as his who stabbed his sleeping child ;

Alas for him who blindly strays apart,
And seeking God has lost his human heart !

Fall where they might, no flying cinders
 caught
 These sober halls where WADSWORTH ruled
 and taught.

One footstep more ; the fourth receding
 stride
 Leaves the round century on the nearer side.
 GOD SAVE KING CHARLES ! God knows that
 pleasant knave
 His grace will find it hard enough to save.
 Ten years and more, and now the Plague,
 the Fire,
 Talk of all tongues, at last begin to tire ;
 One fear prevails, all other frights forgot,—
 White lips are whispering,—hark ! *The*
Popish Plot !
 Happy New England, from such troubles free
 In health and peace beyond the stormy sea !
 No Romish daggers threat her children's
 throats,
 No gibbering nightmare mutters "*Titus*
Oates" ;
 Philip is slain, the Quaker graves are green,
 Not yet the witch has entered on the scene ;
 Happy our Harvard ; pleased her graduates
 four ;
 URIAN OAKES the name their parchments
 bore.

Two centuries past, our hurried feet
arrive
At the last footprint of the scanty five ;
Take the fifth stride ; our wandering eyes
explore
A tangled forest on a trackless shore ;
Here, where we stand, the savage sorcerer
howls,
The wild-cat snarls, the stealthy gray wolf
prowls,
The slouching bear, perchance the trampling
moose
Starts the brown squaw and scares her red
pappoose ;
At every step the lurking foe is near ;
His Demons reign ; God has no temple here !

Lift up your eyes ! behold these pictured
walls ;
Look where the flood of western glory
falls
Through the great sunflower disk of blazing
panes
In ruby, saffron, azure, emerald stains ;
With reverent step the marble pavement
tread
Where our proud Mother's martyr-roll is
read ;

See the great halls that cluster, gathering
round

This lofty shrine with holiest memories
crowned ;

See the fair Matron in her summer bower,

Fresh as a rose in bright perennial flower ;

Read on her standard, always in the van,

“TRUTH,”—the one word that makes a
slave a man ;

Think whose the hands that fed her altar-
fires,

Then count the debt we owe our scholar-
sires !

Brothers, farewell ! the fast declining ray

Fades to the twilight of our golden day ;

Some lesson yet our wearied brains may
learn,

Some leaves, perhaps, in life's thin volume
turn.

How few they seem as in our waning age

We count them backwards to the title-page !

Oh let us trust with holy men of old

Not all the story here begun is told ;

So the tired spirit, waiting to be freed,

On life's last leaf with tranquil eye shall read

By the pale glimmer of the torch reversed,

Not *Finis*, but *The End of Volume First* !

MY AVIARY.

THROUGH my north window, in the
wintry weather,—

My airy oriel on the river shore,—
I watch the sea-fowl as they flock together
Where late the boatman flashed his drip-
ping oar.

The gull, high floating, like a sloop unladen,
Lets the loose water waft him as it will;
The duck, round-breasted as a rustic maiden,
Paddles and plunges, busy, busy still.

I see the solemn gulls in council sitting
On some broad ice-floe pondering long and
late,
While overhead the home-bound ducks are
flitting
And leave the tardy conclave in debate,

Those weighty questions in their breasts
revolving
Whose deeper meaning science never
learns,
Till at some reverend elder's look dissolving,
The speechless senate silently adjourns.

But when along the waves the shrill north-easter

Shrieks through the labouring coaster's shrouds "Beware!"

The pale bird, kindling like a Christmas feaster

When some wild chorus shakes the vinous air,

Flaps from the leaden wave in fierce rejoicing,
Feels heaven's dumb lightning thrill his torpid nerves,

Now on the blast his whistling plumage poising,

Now wheeling, whirling in fantastic curves.

Such is our gull: a gentleman of leisure,
Less fleshed than feathered; bagged you'll find him such;

His virtue silence; his employment pleasure;
Not bad to look at, and not good for much.

What of our duck? He has some high-bred cousins,—

His Grace the Canvas-back, My Lord the Brant,—

Anas and *Anser*,—both served up by dozens,
At Boston's *Rocher*, half-way to Nahant.

As for himself, he seems alert and thriving,

Grubs up a living somehow—what, who knows?

Crabs? mussels? weeds?—Look quick!
there's one just diving!

Flop! Splash! his white breast glistens—
down he goes!

And while he's under—just about a
minute—

I take advantage of the fact to say
His fishy carcase has no virtue in it
The gunning idiot's worthless hire to pay.

He knows you! “sportsmen” from suburban
alleys,

Stretched under seaweed in the treacher-
ous punt;

Knows every lazy, shiftless lout that sallies
Forth to waste powder—as *he* says, to
“hunt.”

I watch you with a patient satisfaction,
Well pleased to discount your predestined
luck;

The float that figures in your sly transaction
Will carry back a goose, but not a duck.

Shrewd is our bird ; not easy to outwit him !
Sharp is the outlook of those pin-head
eyes ;
Still, he is mortal and a shot may hit him,
One cannot always miss him if he tries.

Look ! there's a young one, dreaming not
of danger ;
Sees a flat log come floating down the
stream ;
Stares undismayed upon the harmless
stranger ;
Ah ! were all strangers harmless as they
seem !

Habet! a leaden shower his breast has
shattered ;
Vainly he flutters, not again to rise ;
His soft white plumes along the waves are
scattered ;
Helpless the wing that braved the tempest
lies.

He sees his comrades high above him flying
To seek their nests among the island
reeds ;
Strong is their flight ; all lonely he is lying
Washed by the crimsoned water as he
bleeds.

O Thou who carest for the falling sparrow,
Canst Thou the sinless sufferer's pang
forget?

Or is Thy dread account-book's page so
narrow

Its one long column scores Thy creatures'
debt?

Poor gentle guest, by nature kindly
cherished,

A world grows dark with thee in blinding
death;

One little gasp—thy universe has perished,
Wrecked by the idle thief who stole thy
breath!

Is this the whole sad story of creation,
Lived by its breathing myriads o'er and
o'er,—

One glimpse of day, then black annihila-
tion,—

A sunlit passage to a sunless shore?

Give back our faith, ye mystery-solving
lynxes!

Robe us once more in heaven-aspiring
creeds!

Happier was dreaming Egypt with her
sphinxes,

The stony convent with its cross and beads!

How often gazing where a bird reposes,
Rocked on the wavelets, drifting with the
tide,

I lose myself in strange metempsychosis
And float a sea-fowl at a sea-fowl's side ;

From rain, hail, snow in feathery mantle
muffled,
Clear-eyed, strong-limbed, with keenest
sense to hear

My mate soft murmuring, who, with plumes
unruffled,
Where'er I wander still is nestling near ;

The great blue hollow like a garment o'er
me ;

Space all unmeasured, unrecorded time ;
While seen with inward eye moves on before
me

Thought's pictured train in wordless pan-
tomime.

A voice recalls me.—From my window
turning

I find myself a plumeless biped still ;
No beak, no claws, no sign of wings discern-
ing,—
In fact with nothing bird-like but my
quill.

ON THE THRESHOLD.

INTRODUCTION TO A COLLECTION OF POEMS
BY DIFFERENT AUTHORS.

A N usher standing at the door
I show my white rosette;
A smile of welcome, nothing more,
Will pay my trifling debt;
Why should I bid you idly wait
Like lovers at the swinging gate?

Can I forget the wedding guest?
The veteran of the sea?
In vain the listener smites his breast, —
“There was a ship,” cries he!
Poor fasting victim, stunned and pale,
He needs must listen to the tale.

He sees the gilded throng within,
The sparkling goblets gleam,
The music and the merry din
Through every window stream,
But there he shivers in the cold
Till all the crazy dream is told.

Not mine the graybeard's glittering eye
That held his captive still
To hold my silent prisoners by
And let me have my will;

Nay, *I* were like the three-years' child,
To think you could be so beguiled !

My verse is but the curtain's fold
That hides the painted scene,
The mist by morning's ray unrolled
That veils the meadow's green,
The cloud that needs must drift away
To show the rose of opening day.

See, from the tinkling rill you hear
In hollowed palm I bring
These scanty drops, but ah, how near
The founts that heavenward spring !
Thus, open wide the gates are thrown
And founts and flowers are all your own !

TO GEORGE PEABODY.

DANVERS, 1866.

BANKRUPT ! our pockets inside out !
Empty of words to speak his praises !
Worcester and Webster up the spout !
Dead broke of laudatory phrases !
Yet why with flowery speeches tease,
With vain superlatives distress him ?
Has language better words than these ?
THE FRIEND OF ALL HIS RACE, GOD BLESS
HIM !

A simple prayer—but words more sweet
By human lips were never uttered,
Since Adam left the country seat
Where angel wings around him fluttered.
The old look on with tear-dimmed eyes,
The children cluster to caress him,
And every voice unbidden cries,
THE FRIEND OF ALL HIS RACE, GOD BLESS
HIM !

AT THE PAPYRUS CLUB.

A LOVELY show for eyes to see
I looked upon this morning,—
A bright-hued, feathered company
Of nature's own adorning ;
But ah ! those minstrels would not sing
A listening ear while I lent,—
The lark sat still and preened his wing,
The nightingale was silent ;
I longed for what they gave me not—
Their warblings sweet and fluty,
But grateful still for all I got
I thanked them for their beauty.

A fairer vision meets my view
Of Claras, Margarets, Marys,
In silken robes of varied hue,
Like bluebirds and canaries ;

The roses blush, the jewels gleam,
The silks and satins glisten,
The black eyes flash, the blue eyes beam,
We look—and then we listen :
Behold the flock we cage to-night—
Was ever such a capture ?
To see them is a pure delight ;
To hear them—ah ! what rapture !

Methinks I hear Delilah's laugh
At Samson bound in fetters ;
“ *We captured !* ” shrieks each lovelier half,
“ Men think themselves *our* betters !
We push the bolt, we turn the key
On warriors, poets, sages,
Too happy, all of them, to be
Locked in our golden cages ! ”

Beware ! the boy with bandaged eyes
Has flung away his blinder ;
He's lost his mother—so he cries—
And here he knows he'll find her :
The rogue ! 'tis but a new device,—
Look out for flying arrows
Whene'er the birds of Paradise
Are perched amid the sparrows !

FOR WHITTIER'S SEVENTIETH
BIRTHDAY.

DECEMBER 17, 1877.

I BELIEVE that the copies of verses
I've spun,
Like Scheherezade's tales, are a thousand
and one ;
You remember the story,—those mornings
in bed,—
'Twas the turn of a copper,—a tale or a
head.

A doom like Scheherezade's falls upon me
In a mandate as stern as the Sultan's decree :
I'm a florist in verse, and what *would* people
say
If I came to a banquet without my bouquet ?

It is trying, no doubt, when the company
knows
Just the look and the smell of each lily and
rose,
The green of each leaf in the sprigs that I
bring,
And the shape of the bunch and the knot of
the string.

Yes,—“the style is the man,” and the nib
of one's pen
Makes the same mark at twenty, and three-
score and ten ;
It is so in all matters, if truth may be told ;
Let one look at the cast he can tell you the
mould.

How we all know each other ! no use in
disguise ;
Through the holes in the mask comes the
flash of the eyes ;
We can tell by his—somewhat—each one of
our tribe,
As we know the old hat which we cannot
describe.

Though in Hebrew, in Sanscrit, in Choctaw
you write,
Sweet singer who gave us the Voices of
Night,
Though in buskin or slipper your song may
be shod,
Or the velvety verse that Evangeline trod,

We shall say, “You can't cheat us,—we
know it is you,”
There is one voice like that, but there can-
not be two,

Maestro, whose chant like the dulcimer
rings :

And the woods will be hushed while the
nightingale sings.

And he, so serene, so majestic, so true,
Whose temple hypæthral the planets shine
through,

Let us catch but five words from that mys-
tical pen,

We should know our one sage from all
children of men.

And he whose bright image no distance can
dim,

Through a hundred disguises we can't mis-
take him,

Whose play is all earnest, whose wit is the
edge

(With a beetle behind) of a sham-splitting
wedge.

Do you know whom we send you, *Hidalgos*
of Spain ?

Do you know your old friends when you see
them again ?

Hosea was Sancho ! you Dons of Madrid,
But Sancho that wielded the lance of the
Cid !

And the wood-thrush of Essex,—you know
whom I mean,
Whose song echoes round us while he sits
unseen,
Whose heart-throbs of verse through our
memories thrill
Like a breath from the wood, like a breeze
from the hill,

So fervid, so simple, so loving, so pure,
We hear but one strain and our verdict is
sure,—
Thee cannot elude us,—no further we
search,—
'Tis Holy George Herbert cut loose from
his church !

We think it a voice of a seraph that sings,—
Alas ! we remember that angels have wings,—
What story is this of the day of his birth ?
Let him live to a hundred ! we want him
on earth !

One life has been paid him (in gold) by the sun ;
One account has been squared and another
begun ;
But he never will die if he lingers below
Till we've paid him in love half the balance
we owe !

TWO SONNETS : HARVARD.

At the meeting of the New York Harvard Club,
February 21, 1878.

“CHRISTO ET ECCLESIAE.” 1700.

TO GOD'S ANOINTED AND HIS CHOSEN
FLOCK :

So ran the phrase the black-robed con-
clave chose

To guard the sacred cloisters that arose
Like David's altar on Moriah's rock.

Unshaken still those ancient arches mock
The ram's-horn summons of the windy foes
Who stand like Joshua's army while it
blows

And wait to see them toppling with the
shock.

Christ and the Church. *Their* Church,
whose narrow door

Shut out the many, who if over bold
Like hunted wolves were driven from the
fold,

Bruised with the flails these godly zealots
bore,

Mindful that Israel's altar stood of old
Where echoed once Araunah's threshing-
floor.

1643. "VERITAS." 1878.

TRUTH : So the frontlet's older legend ran,
On the brief record's opening page displayed ;
Not yet those clear-eyed scholars were
afraid
Lest the fair fruit that wrought the woe of
man
By far Euphrates—where our sire began
His search for truth, and, seeking, was
betrayed—
Might work new treason in their forest
shade,
Doubling the curse that brought life's short-
ened span.
Nurse of the future, daughter of the past,
That stern phylactery best becomes thee
now :
Lift to the morning star thy marble brow !
Cast thy brave truth on every warring blast !
Stretch thy white hand to that forbidden
bough,
And let thine earliest symbol be thy last !

THE COMING ERA.

THEY tell us that the Muse is soon to fly
hence,
Leaving the bowers of song that once were
dear,
Her robes bequeathing to her sister, Science,
The groves of Pindus for the axe to clear.

Optics will claim the wandering eye of
fancy,
Physics will grasp imagination's wings,
Plain fact exorcise fiction's necromancy,
The workshop hammer where the minstrel
sings.

No more with laughter at Thalia's frolics
Our eyes shall twinkle till the tears run
down,
But in her place the lecturer on hydraulics
Spout forth his watery science to the town.

No more our foolish passions and affections
The tragic Muse with mimic grief shall
try,
But, nobler far, a course of vivisections
Teach what it costs a tortured brute to
die.

The unearthed monad, long in buried rocks
hid,
Shall tell the secret whence our being
came ;
The chemist show us death is life's black
oxide,
Left when the breath no longer fans its
flame.

Instead of crack-brained poets in their attics
Filling thin volumes with their flowery
talk,
There shall be books of wholesome mathe-
matics ;
The tutor with his blackboard and his
chalk.

No longer bards with madrigal and sonnet
Shall woo to moonlight walks the ribboned
sex,
But side by side the beaver and the bonnet
Stroll, calmly pondering on some pro-
blem's x .

The sober bliss of serious calculation
Shall mock the trivial joys that fancy
drew,
And, oh, the rapture of a solved equation,—
One self-same answer on the lips of two !

So speak in solemn tones our youthful sages,
Patient, severe, laborious, slow, exact,
As o'er creation's protoplasmic pages
They browse and munch the thistle crops
of fact.

And yet we've sometimes found it rather
pleasant
To dream again the scenes that Shake-
speare drew,—
To walk the hillside with the Scottish
peasant
Among the daisies wet with morning's
dew ;

To leave awhile the daylight of the real,
Led by the guidance of the master's hand,
For the strange radiance of the far ideal,—
"The light that never was on sea or land."

Well, Time alone can lift the future's cur-
tain,—
Science may teach our children all she
knows,
But Love will kindle fresh young hearts,
'tis certain,
And June will not forget her blushing
rose.

And so, in spite of all that Time is bringing,—

Treasures of truth and miracles of art,
Beauty and Love will keep the poet singing,
And song still live, the science of the
heart.

IN RESPONSE.

Breakfast at the Century Club, New York, May 1879.

SUCH kindness! the scowl of a cynic
would soften,
His pulse beat its way to some eloquent
words,

Alas! my poor accents have echoed too often,
Like that *Pinafore* music you've some of
you heard.

Do you know me, dear strangers—the hundredth time comer

At banquets and feasts since the days of
my Spring?

Ah! would I could borrow one rose of my
Summer,

But this is a leaf of my Autumn I bring.

I look at your faces,—I'm sure there are
some from

The three-breasted mother I count as my
own ;

You think you remember the place you
have come from,

But how it has changed in the years that
have flown !

Unaltered, 'tis true, is the hall we call
“ Funnel,”

Still fights the “ Old South ” in the battle
for life,

But we've opened our door to the West
through the tunnel,

And we've cut off Fort Hill with our
Amazon knife.

You should see the new Westminster Boston
has builded,—

Its mansions, its spires, its museums of
arts,—

You should see the great dome we have
gorgeously gilded,—

'Tis the light of our eyes, 'tis the joy of
our hearts.

When first in his path a young asteroid
found it,
As he sailed through the skies with the
stars in his wake,
He thought 'twas the sun, and kept circling
around it
Till Edison signalled, "You've made a
mistake."

We are proud of our city,—her fast-growing
figure,
The warp and the woof of her brain and
her hands,—
But we're proudest of all that her heart has
grown bigger,
And warms with fresh blood as her girdle
expands.

One lesson the rubric of conflict has taught
her :
Though parted awhile by war's earth-
rending shock,
The lines that divide us are written in
water,
The love that unites us cut deep in the
rock.

As well might the Judas of treason endeavour

To write his black name on the disk of the sun

As try the bright star-wreath that binds us to sever

And blot the fair legend of "Many in One."

We love you, tall sister, the stately, the splendid,—

The banner of empire floats high on your towers,

Yet ever in welcome your arms are extended,—

We share in your splendours, your glory is ours.

Yes, Queen of the Continent! All of us own thee—

The gold-freighted argosies flock at thy call,

The naiads, the sea-nymphs have met to enthrone thee,

But the Broadway of one is the Highway of all!

I thank you. Three words that can hardly
be mended,
Though phrases on phrases their eloquence
pile,
If you hear the heart's throb with their
eloquence blended,
And read all they mean in a sunshiny smile.

FOR THE MOORE CENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION.

MAY 28, 1879.

I.

ENCHANTER of Erin, whose magic has
bound us,
Thy wand for one moment we fondly
would claim,
Entranced while it summons the phantoms
around us
That blush into life at the sound of thy
name.

The tell-tales of memory wake from their
slumbers,—

I hear the old song with its tender refrain—
What passion lies hid in those honey-voiced
numbers !

What perfume of youth in each exquisite
strain !

The home of my childhood comes back as
a vision,—

Hark! Hark! A soft chord from its
song-haunted room,—

'Tis a morning of May, when the air is
Elysian—

The syringa in bud and the lilac in
bloom,—

We are clustered around the "Clementi"
piano,—

There were six of us then,—there are two
of us now,—

She is singing—the girl with the silver
soprano—

How "The Lord of the Valley" was false
to his vow;

"Let Erin remember" the echoes are
calling;

Through "The Vale of Avoca" the waters
are rolled;

"The Exile" laments while the night-dews
are falling;

"The Morning of Life" dawns again as
of old.

But ah! those warm love-songs of fresh
adolescence!

Around us such raptures celestial they
flung

That it seemed as if Paradise breathed its
quintessence

Through the seraph-toned lips of the
maiden that sung!

Long hushed are the chords that my boy-
hood enchanted

As when the smooth wave by the angel
was stirred,

Yet still with their musicis memory haunted,
And oft in my dreams are their melodies
heard.

I feel like the priest to his altar return-
ing,—

The crowd that was kneeling no longer is
there,

The flame has died down, but the brands
are still burning,

And sandal and cinnamon sweeten the
air.

II.

The veil for her bridal young Summer is
 weaving
 In her azure-domed hall with its tapes-
 tried floor,
 And Spring the last tear-drop of May-dew
 is leaving
 On the daisy of Burns and the shamrock
 of Moore.

How like, how unlike, as we view them to-
 gether,
 The song of the minstrels whose record
 we scan,—
 One fresh as the breeze blowing over the
 heather,
 One sweet as the breath from an odal-
 isque's fan !

Ah, passion can glow 'mid a palace's
 splendour ;
 The cage does not alter the song of the
 bird ;
 And the curtain of silk has known whispers
 as tender
 As ever the blossoming hawthorn has
 heard.

No fear lest the step of the soft-slippered
Graces

Should fright the young Loves from their
warm little nest,

For the heart of a queen, under jewels and
laces,

Beats time with the pulse in the peasant
girl's breast !

Thrice welcome each gift of kind Nature's
bestowing !

Her fountain heeds little the goblet we
hold ;

Alike, when its musical waters are flow-
ing,

The shell from the seaside, the chalice of
gold.

The twins of the lyre to her voices had
listened ;

Both laid their best gifts upon Liberty's
shrine ;

For Coila's loved minstrel the holly-wreath
glistened ;

For Erin's the rose and the myrtle en-
twine.

And while the fresh blossoms of summer
are braided

For the sea-girdled, stream-silvered, lake-
jewelled isle,

While her mantle of verdure is woven un-
faded,

While Shannon and Liffey shall dimple and
smile,

The land where the staff of Saint Patrick
was planted,

Where the shamrock grows green from the
cliffs to the shore,

The land of fair maidens and heroes un-
daunted,

Shall wreathe her bright harp with the
garlands of Moore !

TO JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

APRIL 4, 1880.

I BRING the simplest pledge of love,
Friend of my earlier days ;
Mine is the hand without the glove,
The heart-beat, not the phrase.

How few still breathe this mortal air
We called by school-boy names !
You still, whatever robe you wear,
To me are always James.

That name the kind apostle bore
Who shames the sullen creeds,
Not trusting less, but loving more,
And showing faith by deeds.

What blending thoughts our memories
share !

What visions yours and mine
Of May-days in whose morning air
The dews were golden wine,

Of vistas bright with opening day,
Whose all-awakening sun
Showed in life's landscape, far away,
The summits to be won !

The heights are gained. Ah, say not so
For him who smiles at time,
Leaves his tired comrades down below,
And only lives to climb !

His labours,—will they ever cease,—
With hand and tongue and pen ?
Shall wearied Nature ask release
At threescore years and ten ?

Our strength the clustered seasons tax—
 For him new life they mean ;
 Like rods around the lictor's axe
 They keep him bright and keen.

The wise, the brave, the strong, we know,—
 We mark them here or there,
 But he—we roll our eyes, and lo !
 We find him everywhere !

With truth's bold cohorts, or alone,
 He strides through error's field ;
 His lance is ever manhood's own,
 His breast is woman's shield.

Count not his years while earth has need
 Of souls that Heaven inflames
 With sacred zeal to save, to lead,—
 Long live our dear Saint James !

WELCOME TO THE CHICAGO COMMERCIAL CLUB.

JANUARY 14, 1880.

CHICAGO sounds rough to the maker of
 verse ;
 One comfort we have—Cincinnati sounds
 worse ;

If we only were licensed to say Chicagó !
But Worcester and Webster won't let us,
you know.

No matter, we songsters must sing as we can;
We can make some nice couplets with Lake
Michigan,
And what more resembles a nightingale's
voice
Than the oily trisyllable, sweet Illinois?

Your waters are fresh, while our harbour is
salt,
But we know you can't help it—it isn't
your fault;
Our city is old and your city is new,
But the railroad men tell us we're greener
than you.

You have seen our gilt dome, and no doubt
you've been told
That the orbs of the universe round it are
rolled;
But I'll own it to you, and I ought to
know best,
That this isn't quite true of all stars of the
West.

118 WELCOME TO CHICAGO COMMERCIAL CLUB.

You 'll go to Mount Auburn,—we 'll show
you the track,—
And can stay there,—unless you prefer to
come back ;
And Bunker's tall shaft you can climb if
you will,
But you 'll puff like a paragraph praising a
pill.

You must see—but you *have* seen—our old
Faneuil Hall,
Our churches, our school-rooms, our sample-
rooms, all ;
And, perhaps, though the idiots must have
their jokes,
You have found our good people much like
other folks.

There are cities by rivers, by lakes, and by
seas,
Each as full of itself as a cheese-mite of
cheese ;
And a city will brag as a game-cock will crow :
Don't your cockerels at home—just a little,
you know ?

But we 'll crow for you now—here 's a health
to the boys,
Men, maidens, and matrons of fair Illinois,

WELCOME TO CHICAGO COMMERCIAL CLUB. 119

And the rainbow of friendship that arches
its span
From the green of the sea to the blue
Michigan !

AMERICAN ACADEMY CENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION.

MAY 26, 1880.

SIRE, son, and grandson ; so the century
glides ;

Three lives, three strides, three foot-
prints in the sand ;

Silent as midnight's falling meteor slides

Into the stillness of the far-off land ;

How dim the space its little arc has
spanned !

See on this opening page the names renowned

Tombed in these records on our dusty
shelves,

Scarce on the scroll of living memory found,

Save where the wan-eyed antiquarian
delves ;

Shadows they seem ; ah, what are we
ourselves ?

Pale ghosts of Bowdoin, Winthrop, Willard,
 West,
 Sages of busy brain and wrinkled brow,
 Searchers of Nature's secrets unconfessed,
 Asking of all things Whence and Why
 and How—
 What problems meet your larger vision
 now?

Has Gannett tracked the wild Aurora's
 path?
 Has Bowdoin found his all-surrounding
 sphere?
 What question puzzles ciphering Philomath?
 Could Williams make the hidden causes
 clear
 Of the Dark Day that filled the land with
 fear?

Dear ancient school-boys! Nature taught
 to them
 The simple lessons of the star and flower,
 Showed them strange sights; how on a
 single stem,—
 Admire the marvels of Creative Power!—
 Twin apples grew, one sweet, the other
 sour;

How from the hill-top where our eyes
beheld

In even ranks the plumed and bannered
maize

Range its long columns, in the days of old
The live volcano shot its angry blaze,—
Dead since the showers of Noah's watery
days ;

How, when the lightning split the mighty
rock,

The spreading fury of the shaft was
spent !

How the young scion joined the alien stock,
And when and where the homeless
swallows went

To pass the winter of their discontent.

Scant were the gleanings in those years of
dearth ;

No Cuvier yet had clothed the fossil
bones

That slumbered, waiting for their second
birth ;

No Lyell read the legend of the stones ;
Science still pointed to her empty thrones.

Dreaming of orbs to eyes of earth unknown,
 Herschell looked heavenwards in the
 starlight pale ;

Lost in those awful depths he trod alone,
 Laplace stood mute before the lifted veil ;
 While home-bred Humboldt trimmed his
 toy ship's sail.

No mortal feet these loftier heights had-
 gained

Whence the wide realms of Nature we
 descry ;

In vain their eyes our longing fathers
 strained

To scan with wondering gaze the summits
 high

That far beneath their children's foot-
 paths lie.

Smile at their first small ventures as we
 may,

The school-boy's copy shapes the scholar's
 hand,

Their grateful memory fills our hearts to-
 day ;

Brave, hopeful, wise, this bower of peace
 they planned,

While war's dread ploughshare scarred the
 suffering land.

Child of our children's children yet unborn,
 When on this yellow page you turn your
 eyes,
 Where the brief record of this May-day
 morn
 In phrase antique and faded letters lies,
 How vague, how pale our flitting ghosts
 will rise !

Yet in our veins the blood ran warm and
 red,
 For us the fields were green, the skies
 were blue,
 Though from our dust the spirit long has
 fled,
 We lived, we loved, we toiled, we dreamed
 like you,
 Smiled at our sires and thought how much
 we knew.

Oh might our spirits for one hour return,
 When the next century rounds its
 hundredth ring,
 All the strange secrets it shall teach to
 learn,
 To hear the larger truths its years shall
 bring,
 Its wiser sages talk, its sweeter minstrels
 sing !

THE SCHOOL-BOY.

Read at the Centennial Celebration of the foundation
of Phillips Academy, Andover.

1778-1878.

THESE hallowed precincts, long to
memory dear,
Smile with fresh welcome as our feet draw
near ;
With softer gales the opening leaves are
fanned,
With fairer hues the kindling flowers
expand,
The rose-bush reddens with the blush of
June,
The groves are vocal with their minstrels'
tune,
The mighty elm, beneath whose arching
shade
The wandering children of the forest strayed,
Greets the bright morning in its bridal dress,
And spreads its arms the gladsome dawn to
bless.
Is it an idle dream that nature shares
Our joys, our griefs, our pastimes, and our
cares ?

Is there no summons when, at morning's
call,

The sable vestments of the darkness fall?
Does not meek evening's low-voiced *Ave*
blend

With the soft vesper as its notes ascend?

Is there no whisper in the perfumed air

When the sweet bosom of the rose is bare?

Does not the sunshine call us to rejoice?

Is there no meaning in the storm-cloud's
voice?

No silent message when from midnight skies

Heaven looks upon us with its myriad eyes?

Or shift the mirror ; say our dreams diffuse
O'er life's pale landscape their celestial hues,
Lend heaven the rainbow it has never
known,

And robe the earth in glories not its own,

Sing their own music in the summer breeze,

With fresher foliage clothe the stately trees,

Stain the June blossoms with a livelier dye

And spread a bluer azure on the sky,—

Blest be the power that works its lawless
will

And finds the weediest patch an Eden still ;

No walls so fair as those our fancies build,—

No views so bright as those our visions gild!

So ran my lines, as pen and paper met,
The truant goose-quill travelling like Plan-
chette ;
Too ready servant, whose deceitful ways
Full many a slipshod line, alas ! betrays ;
Hence of the rhyming thousand not a few
Have builded worse—a great deal—than
they knew.

What need of idle fancy to adorn
Our mother's birthplace on her birthday
morn ?
Hers are the blossoms of eternal spring,
From these green boughs her new-fledged
birds take wing,
These echoes hear their earliest carols sung,
In this old nest the brood is ever young.
If some tired wanderer, resting from his
flight,
Amid the gay young choristers alight,
These gather round him, mark his faded
plumes
That faintly still the far-off grove perfumes,
And listen, wondering if some feeble note
Yet lingers, quavering in his weary throat :—
I, whose fresh voice yon red-faced temple
knew,
What tune is left me, fit to sing to you ?

Ask not the grandeurs of a laboured song,
But let my easy couplets slide along ;
Much could I tell you that you know too
 well ;
Much I remember, but I will not tell ;
Age brings experience ; graybeards oft are
 wise,
But oh ! how sharp a youngster's ears and
 eyes !

My cheek was bare of adolescent down
When first I sought the academic town ;
Slow rolls the coach along the dusty road,
Big with its filial and parental load ;
The frequent hills, the lonely woods are
 past,
The school-boy's chosen home is reached at
 last.
I see it now, the same unchanging spot,
The swinging gate, the little garden plot,
The narrow yard, the rock that made its
 floor,
The flat, pale house, the knocker-garnished
 door,
The small, trim parlour, neat, decorous,
 chill,
The strange, new faces, kind, but grave
 and still ;

Two, creased with age,—or what I then
called age,—

Life's volume open at its fiftieth page ;
One, a shy maiden's, pallid, placid, sweet
As the first snowdrop, which the sunbeams
greet ;

One, the last nursling's ; slight she was,
and fair,

Her smooth white forehead warmed with
auburn hair ;

Last came the virgin Hymen long had
spared,

Whose daily cares the grateful household
shared,

Strong, patient, humble ; her substantial
frame

Stretched the chaste draperies I forbear to
name.

Brave, but with effort, had the school-boy
come

To the cold comfort of a stranger's home ;

How like a dagger to my sinking heart

Came the dry summons, " It is time to part ;
Good-bye ! " " Goo—ood-bye ! " one fond
maternal kiss. . . .

Homesick as death ! Was ever pang like
this ? . . .

Too young as yet with willing feet to stray
From the tame fireside, glad to get away,—

Too old to let my watery grief appear,—
And what so bitter as a swallowed tear !

One figure still my vagrant thoughts
pursue ;

First boy to greet me, Ariel, where are you ?
Imp of all mischief, heaven alone knows how
You learned it all,—are you an angel now,
Or tottering gently down the slope of years,
Your face grown sober in the vale of tears ?
Forgive my freedom if you are breathing
still ;

If in a happier world, I know you will.
You were a school-boy—what beneath the
sun

So like a monkey ? I was also one.

Strange, sure enough, to see what curious
shoots

The nursery raises from the study's roots !
In those old days the very, very good
Took up more room—a little—than they
should ;

Something too much one's eyes encountered
then

Of serious youth and funeral-visaged men ;
The solemn elders saw life's mournful half,—
Heaven sent this boy, whose mission was to
laugh,

Drollest of buffos, Nature's odd protest,
A catbird squealing in a blackbird's nest.

Kind, faithful Nature! While the sour-
eyed Scot—
Her cheerful smiles forbidden or forgot—
Talks only of his preacher and his kirk,—
Hears five-hour sermons for his Sunday
work,—
Praying and fasting till his meagre face
Gains its due length, the genuine sign of
grace,—
An Ayrshire mother in the land of Knox
Her embryo poet in his cradle rocks;—
Nature, long shivering in her dim eclipse,
Steals in a sunbeam to those baby lips;
So to its home her banished smile returns,
And Scotland sweetens with the song of
Burns!

The morning came; I reached the classic
hall;
A clock-face eyed me, staring from the
wall;
Beneath its hands a printed line I read:
YOUTH IS LIFE'S SEED-TIME: so the clock-
face said:
Some took its counsel, as the sequel
showed,—
Sowed,—their wild oats,—and reaped as
they had sowed.

How all comes back ! the upward slanting
floor,—
The masters' thrones that flank the central
door,—
The long, outstretching alleys that divide
The rows of desks that stand on either
side,—
The staring boys, a face to every desk,
Bright, dull, pale, blooming, common,
picturesque.
Grave is the Master's look ; his forehead
wears
Thick rows of wrinkles, prints of worrying
cares ;
Uneasy lie the heads of all that rule,
His most of all whose kingdom is a school.
Supreme he sits ; before the awful frown
That bends his brows the boldest eye goes
down ;
Not more submissive Israel heard and
saw
At Sinai's foot the Giver of the Law.
Less stern he seems, who sits in equal
state
On the twin throne and shares the empire's
weight ;
Around his lips the subtle life that plays
Steals quaintly forth in many a jesting
phrase ;

A lightsome nature, not so hard to chafe,
Pleasant when pleased ; rough-handled, not
so safe ;
Some tingling memories vaguely I recall,
But to forgive him. God forgive us all !

One yet remains, whose well-remembered
name
Pleads in my grateful heart its tender claim ;
His was the charm magnetic, the bright look
That sheds its sunshine on the dreariest
book ;
A loving soul to every task he brought
That sweetly mingled with the lore he
taught ;
Sprung from a saintly race that never could
From youth to age be anything but good,
His few brief years in holiest labours spent,
Earth lost too soon the treasure heaven had
lent.
Kindest of teachers, studious to divine
Some hint of promise in my earliest line,
These faint and faltering words thou canst
not hear
Throb from a heart that holds thy memory
dear.
As to the traveller's eye the varied plain
Shows through the window of the flying
train,

A mingled landscape, rather felt than seen,
A gravelly bank, a sudden flash of green,
A tangled wood, a glittering stream that
flows

Through the cleft summit where the cliff
once rose,

All strangely blended in a hurried gleam,
Rock, wood, waste, meadow, village, hill-
side, stream,—

So, as we look behind us, life appears,
Seen through the vista of our bygone years.

Yet in the dead past's shadow-filled
domain,

Some vanished shapes the hues of life retain;
Unbidden, oft, before our dreaming eyes
From the vague mists in memory's path they
rise.

So comes his blooming image to my view,
The friend of joyous days when life was
new,

Hope yet untamed, the blood of youth un-
chilled,

No blank arrear of promise unfulfilled,
Life's flower yet hidden in its sheltering
fold,

Its pictured canvas yet to be unrolled.

His the frank smile I vainly look to greet,

His the warm grasp my clasping hand should
meet;

How would our lips renew their school-boy
talk,

Our feet retrace the old familiar walk !

For thee no more earth's cheerful morning
shines

Through the green fringes of the tented
pines ;

Ah me ! is heaven so far thou canst not hear,
Or is thy viewless spirit hovering near,

A fair young presence, bright with morning's
glow,

The fresh-cheeked boy of fifty years ago ?

Yes, fifty years, with all their circling
suns,

Behind them all my glance reverted runs ;

Where now that time remote, its griefs, its
joys,

Where are its gray-haired men, its bright-
haired boys ?

Where is the patriarch time could hardly
tire,—

The good old, wrinkled, immemorial
“squire” ?

(An honest treasurer, like a black-plumed
swan,

Not every day our eyes may look upon.)

Where the tough champion who, with
Calvin's sword,

In wordy conflicts battled for the Lord ?

Where the grave scholar, lonely, calm,
austere,
Whose voice like music charmed the listen-
ing ear,
Whose light rekindled, like the morning
star,
Still shines upon us through the gates ajar?
Where the still, solemn, weary, sad-eyed
man,
Whose careworn face my wandering eyes
would scan,—
His features wasted in the lingering strife
With the pale foe that drains the student's
life?
Where my old friend, the scholar, teacher,
saint,
Whose creed, some hinted, showed a speck
of taint;
He broached his own opinion, which is not
Lightly to be forgiven or forgot;
Some riddle's point,—I scarce remember
now,—
Homo*i*-, perhaps, where they said homo-ou
(If the unlettered greatly wish to know
Where lies the difference betwixt *oi* and *o*,
Those of the curious who have time may
search
Among the stale conundrums of their
church).

Beneath his roof his peaceful life I shared,
And for his modes of faith I little cared,—
I, taught to judge men's dogmas by their
deeds,
Long ere the days of india-rubber creeds.

Why should we look one common faith to
find,
Where one in every score is colour-blind?
If here on earth they know not red from
green,
Will they see better into things unseen!
Once more to time's old graveyard I return
And scrape the moss from memory's pictured
urn.
Who, in these days when all things go by
steam,
Recalls the stage-coach with its four-horse
team?
Its sturdy driver,—who remembers him?
Or the old landlord, saturnine and grim,
Who left our hill-top for a new abode
And reared his sign-post farther down the
road?
Still in the waters of the dark Shawshine
Do the young bathers splash and think
they're clean?
Do pilgrims find their way to Indian Ridge,
Or journey onward to the far-off bridge,

And bring to younger ears the story back
Of the broad stream, the mighty Merrimac?
Are there still truant feet that stray beyond
These circling bounds to Pomp's or Haggett's
Pond,

Or where the legendary name recalls
The forest's earlier tenant,—“Deerjump
Falls”?

Yes, every nook these youthful feet
explore,

Just as our sires and grandsires did of yore;
So all life's opening paths, where nature led
Their father's feet, the children's children
tread.

Roll the round century's fivescore years
away,

Call from our storied past that earliest day
When great Eliphalet (I can see him now,—
Big name, big frame, big voice, and beetling
brow),

Then *young* Eliphalet,—ruled the rows of boys
In homespun gray or old-world corduroys,—
And save for fashion's whims, the benches
show

The self-same youths, the very boys we know.
Time works strange marvels: since I trod
the green

And swung the gates, what wonders I have
seen!

But come what will,—the sky itself may
fall,—
As things of course the boy accepts them all.
The prophet's chariot, drawn by steeds of
flame,
For daily use our travelling millions claim;
The face we love a sunbeam makes our own;
No more the surgeon hears the sufferer's
groan ;
What unwrit histories wrapped in darkness
lay
Till shovelling Schliemann bared them to
the day !
Your Richelieu says, and says it well, my
lord,
The pen is (sometimes) mightier than the
sword ;
Great is the goosequill, say we all ; Amen !
Sometimes the spade is mightier than the
pen ;
It shows where Babel's terraced walls were
raised,
The slabs that cracked when Nimrod's
palace blazed,
Uncarths Mycenæ, rediscovers Troy,—
Calmly he listens, that immortal boy.
A new Prometheus tips our wands with fire,
A mightier Orpheus strains the whispering
wire,

Whose lightning thrills the lazy winds out-
run

And hold the hours as Joshua stayed the
sun,—

So swift, in truth, we hardly find a place
For those dim fictions known as time and
space.

Still a new miracle each year supplies,—
See at his work the chemist of the skies,
Who questions Sirius in his tortured rays
And steals the secret of the solar blaze ;
Hush ! while the window-rattling bugles
play

The nation's airs a hundred miles away !
That wicked phonograph ! hark ! how it
swears !

Turn it again and make it say its prayers !
And was it true, then, what the story said
Of Oxford's friar and his brazen head ?
While wondering Science stands, herself
perplexed

At each day's miracle, and asks "What
next ?"

The immortal boy, the coming heir of all,
Springs from his desk to "urge the flying
ball,"

Cleaves with his bending oar the glassy
waves,

With sinewy arm the dashing current braves,

The same bright creature in these haunts of
ours
That Eton shadowed with her "antique
towers."

Boy! Where is he? the long-limbed
youth inquires,
Whom his rough chin with manly pride
inspires;
Ah, when the ruddy cheek no longer glows,
When the bright hair is white as winter
snows,
When the dim eye has lost its lambent flame,
Sweet to his ear will be his school-boy name!
Nor think the difference mighty as it seems
Between life's morning and its evening
dreams;
Fourscore, like twenty, has its tasks and
toys;
In earth's wide school-house all are girls
and boys.

Brothers, forgive my wayward fancy.
Who
Can guess beforehand what his pen will do?
Too light my strain for listeners such as
these,
Whom graver thoughts and soberer speech
shall please.

Is he not here whose breath of holy song
Has raised the downcast eyes of Faith so
long?
Are they not here, the strangers in your
gates,
For whom the wearied ear impatient waits,—
The large-brained scholars whom their toils
release,—
The bannered heralds of the Prince of
Peace?

Such was the gentle friend whose youth
unblamed
In years long past our student-benches
claimed;
Whose name, illumined on the sacred page,
Lives in the labours of his riper age;
Such he whose record time's destroying march
Leaves uneffaced on Zion's springing arch:
Not to the scanty phrase of measured song,
Cramped in its fetters, names like these
belong;
One ray they lend to gild my slender line—
Their praise I leave to sweeter lips than
mine.
Homes of our sires, where Learning's
temple rose,
While yet they struggled with their banded
foes,

As in the West thy century's sun descends,
One parting gleam its dying radiance lends.
Darker and deeper though the shadows fall
From the gray towers on Doubting Castle's
wall,

Though Pope and Pagan re-array their hosts,
And her new armour youthful Science boasts,
Truth, for whose altar rose this holy shrine,
Shall fly for refuge to these bowers of thine;
No past shall chain her with its rusted vow,
No Jew's phylactery bind her Christian brow,
But Faith shall smile to find her sister free
And nobler manhood draw its life from thee.

Long as the arching skies above thee
spread,
As on thy groves the dews of heaven are
shed,
With currents widening still from year to
year,
And deepening channels, calm, untroubled,
clear,
Flow the twin streamlets from thy sacred
hill—
Pieria's fount and Siloam's shaded rill!

THE SILENT MELODY.

“BRING me my broken harp,” he said ;
“We both are wrecks,—but as ye
will,—

Though all its ringing tones have fled,
Their echoes linger round, it still ;
It had some golden strings, I know,
But that was long—how long !—ago.

“I cannot see its tarnished gold,
I cannot hear its vanished tone,
Scarce can my trembling fingers hold
The pillared frame so long their own ;
We both are wrecks,—a while ago
It had some silver strings, I know,

“But on them Time too long has played
The solemn strain that knows no change,
And where of old my fingers strayed
The chords they find are new and
strange,—
Yes ! iron strings,—I know,—I know,—
We both are wrecks of long ago.

“ We both are wrecks,—a shattered pair,—
Strange to ourselves in time’s disguise . . .
What say ye to the lovesick air
That brought the tears from Marian’s
eyes ?

Ay ! trust me,—under breasts of snow
Hearts could be melted long ago !

“ Or will ye hear the storm-song’s crash
That from his dreams the soldier woke,
And bade him face the lightning flash
When battle’s cloud in thunder broke ? . . .
Wrecks,—nought but wrecks !—the time
was when
We two were worth a thousand men ! ”

And so the broken harp they bring
With pitying smiles that none could blame;
Alas ! there’s not a single string
Of all that filled the tarnished frame !
But see ! like children overjoyed,
His finger rambling through the void !

“ I clasp thee ! Ay . . . mine ancient
lyre . . .
Nay, guide my wandering fingers. . . .
There !
They love to dally with the wire
As Isaac played with Esau’s hair. . . .

Hush ! ye shall hear the famous tune
That Marian called the Breath of June ! ”

And so they softly gather round :

Rapt in his tuneful trance he seems :
His fingers move : but not a sound !

A silence like the song of dreams. . . .
“ There ! ye have heard the air,” he cries,
“ That brought the tears from Marian’s
eyes ! ”

Ah, smile not at his fond conceit,
Nor deem his fancy wrought in vain ;
To him the unreal sounds are sweet,—
No discord mars the silent strain
Scored on life’s latest, starlit page—
The voiceless melody of age.

Sweet are the lips of all that sing,
When Nature’s music breathes unsought,
But never yet could voice or string
So truly shape our tenderest thought
As when by life’s decaying fire
Our fingers sweep the stringless lyre !

OUR HOME—OUR COUNTRY.

FOR THE SEMI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF
THE SETTLEMENT OF CAMBRIDGE, MASS.,
DECEMBER 28, 1880.

YOUR home was mine,—kind Nature's
gift;

My love no years can chill ;
In vain their flakes the storm-winds sift,
The snowdrop hides beneath the drift,
A living blossom still.

Mute are a hundred long-famed lyres,
Hushed all their golden strings ;
One lay the coldest bosom fires,
One song, one only, never tires
While sweet-voiced memory sings.

No spot so lone but echo knows
That dear familiar strain ;
In tropic isles, on arctic snows,
Through burning lips its music flows
And rings its fond refrain.

From Pisa's tower my straining sight
Roamed wandering leagues away,
When lo ! a frigate's banner bright,
The starry blue, the red, the white,
In far Livorno's bay.

Hot leaps the life-blood from my heart,
Forth springs the sudden tear ;
The ship that rocks by yonder mart
Is of my land, my life, a part,—
Home, home, sweet home, is here !

Fades from my view the sunlit scene,—
My vision spans the waves ;
I see the elm-encircled green,
The tower,—the steeple,—and, between,
The field of ancient graves.

There runs the path my feet would tread
When first they learned to stray ;
There stands the gambrel roof that spread
Its quaint old angles o'er my head
When first I saw the day.

The sounds that met my boyish ear
My inward sense salute,—
The woodnotes wild I loved to hear,—
The robin's challenge, sharp and clear,—
The breath of evening's flute.

The faces loved from cradle days,—
Unseen, alas, how long !
As fond remembrance round them plays,
Touched with its softening moonlight rays,
Through fancy's portal throng.

And see ! as if the opening skies
Some angel form had spared
Us wingless mortals to surprise,
The little maid with light-blue eyes,
White necked and golden haired !

So rose the picture full in view
I paint in feebler song ;
Such power the seamless banner knew
Of red and white and starry blue
For exiles banished long.

Oh, boys, dear boys, who wait as men
To guard its heaven-bright folds,
Blest are the eyes that see again
That banner, seamless now, as then,—
The fairest earth beholds !

Sweet was the Tuscan air and soft
In that unfading hour,
And fancy leads my footsteps oft
Up the round galleries, high aloft
On Pisa's threatening tower.

And still in Memory's holiest shrine
I read with pride and joy,
“ For me those stars of empire shine ;
That empire's dearest home is mine ;
I am a Cambridge boy ! ”

POEM.

AT THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY DINNER
OF THE MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL
SOCIETY, JUNE 8, 1881.

THREE paths there be where Learning's
favoured sons,
Trained in the schools which hold her
favoured ones,
Follow their several stars with separate aim;
Each has its honours, each its special claim.
Bred in the fruitful cradle of the East,
First, as of oldest lineage, comes the Priest;
The Lawyer next, in wordy conflict strong,
Full armed to battle for the right,—or wrong;
Last, he whose calling finds its voice in
deeds,
Frail Nature's helper in her sharpest needs.
Each has his gifts, his losses and his gains,
Each his own share of pleasures and of pains;
No lifelong aim with steadfast eye pursued
Finds a smooth pathway all with roses
strewn;
Trouble belongs to man of woman born,—
Tread where he may, his foot will find its
thorn.

Of all the guests at life's perennial feast,
Who of her children sits above the Priest?
For him the brodered robe, the carven seat,
Pride at his beck, and beauty at his feet,
For him the incense fumes, the wine is
poured,

Himself a God, adoring and adored !
His the first welcome when our hearts re-
joice,

His in our dying ear the latest voice,
Font, altar, grave, his steps on all attend,
Our staff, our stay, our all but heavenly
friend !

Where is the meddling hand that dares
to probe

The secret grief beneath his sable robe ?
How grave his port ! how every gesture tells
Here truth abides, here peace for ever dwells ;
Vex not his lofty soul with comments vain ;
Faith asks no questions ; silence, ye profane !

Alas ! too oft while all is calm without
The stormy spirit wars with endless *doubt* ;
This is the mocking spectre, scarce con-
cealed

Behind tradition's bruised and battered
shield.

He sees the sleepless critic, age by age,
Scrawl his new readings on the hallowed
page,

The wondrous deeds that priests and prophets saw

Dissolved in legend, crystallised in law,
And on the soil where saints and martyrs trod
Altars new builded to the Unknown God ;
His shrines imperilled, his evangels torn,—
He dares not limp, but ah ! how sharp his thorn !

Yet while God's herald questions as he reads

The outworn dogmas of his ancient creeds,
Drops from his ritual the exploded verse,
Blots from its page the Athanasian curse,
Though by the critic's dangerous art perplexed,

His holy life is Heaven's unquestioned text ;
That shining guidance doubt can never mar,—
The pillar's flame, the light of Bethlehem's star !

Strong is the moral blister that will draw,
Laid on the conscience of the Man of Law
Whom blindfold Justice lends her eyes to see
Truth in the scale that holds his promised fee.

What ! Has not every lie its truthful side,
Its honest fraction, not to be denied ?

Per contra,—ask the moralist,—in sooth
Has not a lie its share in every truth ?

Then what forbids an honest man to try
To find the truth that lurks in every lie,
And just as fairly call on truth to yield
The lying fraction in its breast concealed?
So the worst rogue shall claim a ready friend
His modest virtues boldly to defend,
And he who shows the record of a saint
See himself blacker than the devil could
paint.

What struggles to his captive soul belong
Who loves the right, yet combats for the
wrong,

Who fights the battle he would fain refuse,
And wins, well knowing that he ought to
lose,

Who speaks with glowing lips and look sin-
cere

In spangled words that make the worse ap-
pear

The better reason; who, behind his mask,
Hides his true self and blushes at his
task,---

What quips, what quilllets cheat the inward
scorn

That mocks such triumph? Has he not his
thorn?

Yet stay thy judgment; were thy life the
prize,

Thy death the forfeit, would thy cynic eyes

See fault in him who bravely dares defend
The cause forlorn, the wretch without a
friend?

Nay, though the rightful side is wisdom's
choice,

Wrong has its rights and claims a cham-
pion's voice ;

Let the strong arm be lifted for the weak,
For the dumb lips the fluent pleader speak ;—
When with warm “rebel” blood our street
was dyed

Who took, unawed, the hated hirelings'
side?

No greener civic wreath can Adams claim,
No brighter page the youthful Quincy's
name !

How blest is he who knows no meaner
strife

Than Art's long battle with the foes of life !
No doubt assails him, doing still his best,
And trusting kindly Nature for the rest ;
No mocking conscience tears the thin dis-
guise

That wraps his breast, and tells him that
he lies.

He comes : the languid sufferer lifts his head
And smiles a welcome from his weary bed ;

He speaks : what music like the tones that
tell,

“Past is the hour of danger,—all is well !”

How can he feel the petty stings of grief

Whose cheering presence always brings
relief ?

What ugly dreams can trouble his repose

Who yields himself to soothe another’s woes ?

Hour after hour the busy day has found

The good physician on his lonely round ;

Mansion and hovel, low and lofty door,

He knows, his journeys every path ex-
plore,—

Where the cold blast has struck with deadly
chill

The sturdy dweller on the storm-swept hill,

Where by the stagnant marsh the sickening
gale

Has blanched the poisoned tenants of the vale,

Where crushed and maimed the bleeding
victim lies,

Where madness raves, where melancholy
sighs,

And where the solemn whisper tells too plain

That all his science, all his art, were vain.

How sweet his fireside when the day is
done

And cares have vanished with the setting
sun !

Evening at last its hour of respite brings
And on his couch his weary length he flings.
Soft be thy pillow, servant of mankind,
Lulled by an opiate Art could never find ;
Sweet be thy slumber,—thou hast earned it
well,—

Pleasant thy dreams ! Clang ! goes the mid-
night bell !

Darkness and storm ! the home is far away
That waits his coming ere the break of day ;
The snow-clad pines their wintry plumage
toss,—

Doubtful the frozen stream his road must
cross ;

Deep lie the drifts, the slanted heaps have
shut

The hardy woodman in his mountain hut,—
Why should thy softer frame the tempest
brave ?

Hast thou no life, no health, to lose or save ?
Look ! read the answer in his patient eyes,—
For him no other voice when suffering cries ;
Deaf to the gale that all around him blows,
A feeble whisper calls him,—and he goes.

Or seek the crowded city,—summer's heat
Glares burning, blinding, in the narrow street,
Still, noisome, deadly, sleeps the envenomed
air,

Unstirred the yellow flag that says "Beware !"

Tempt not thy fate,—one little moment's
breath
Bears on its viewless wing the seeds of
death;
Thou at whose door the gilded chariots
stand,
Whose dear-bought skill unclasps the miser's
hand,
Turn from thy fatal quest, nor cast away
That life so precious ; let a meaner prey
Feed the destroyer's hunger ; live to bless
Those happier homes that need thy care no
less !

Smiling he listens ; has he then a charm
Whose magic virtues peril can disarm ?
No safeguard his ; no amulet he wears,
Too well he knows that Nature never spares
Her truest servant, powerless to defend
From her own weapons her unshrinking
friend.

He dares the fate the bravest well might
shun,
Nor asks reward save only Heaven's " Well
done ! "

Such are the toils, the perils that he
knows,
Days without rest and nights without repose,
Yet all unheeded for the love he bears
His art, his kind, whose every grief he shares.

Harder than these to know how small the
part
Nature's proud empire yields to striving Art;
How, as the tide that rolls around the sphere
Laughs at the mounds that delving arms
uprear,—

Spares some few roods of oozy earth, but still
Wastes and rebuilds the planet at its will,
Comes at its ordered season, night or noon,
Led by the silver magnet of the moon,—
So life's vast tide for ever comes and goes,
Unchecked, resistless, as it ebbs and flows.

Hardest of all, when Art has done her
best,
To find the cuckoo brooding in her nest;
The shrewd adventurer, fresh from parts
unknown,
Kills off the patients Science thought her
own;
Towns from a nostrum-vender get their
name,
Fences and walls the cure-all drug proclaim,
Plasters and pads the willing world beguile,
Fair Lydia greets us with astringent smile,
Munchausen's fellow-countryman unlocks
His new Pandora's globule-holding box,
And as King George inquired, with puzzled
grin,
“How—how the devil get the apple in?”

So ' we ask how,—with wonder-opening
eyes,—

Such pygmy pills can hold such giant lies !

Yes, sharp the trials, stern the daily tasks,
That suffering Nature from her servant asks ;
His the kind office dainty menials scorn,
His path how hard,—at every step a thorn !
What does his saddening, restless slavery
buy ?

What save a right to live, a chance to die,—
To live companion of disease and pain,
To die by poisoned shafts untimely slain ?

Answer from hoary eld, majestic shades,—
From Memphian courts, from Delphic colon-
nades,

Speak in the tones that Persia's despot
heard

When nations treasured every golden word
The wandering echoes wafted o'er the seas
From the far isle that held Hippocrates ;
And thou, best gift that Pergamus could
send

Imperial Rome, her noblest Cæsar's friend,
Master of masters, whose unchallenged sway
Not bold Vesalius dared to disobey ;
Ye who while prophets dreamed of dawning
times

Taught your rude lessons in Salerno's
rhymes,

And ye, the nearer sires, to whom we owe
The better share of all the best we know,
In every land an ever-growing train,
Since wakening Science broke her rusted
chain,—

Speak from the past, and say what prize
was sent

To crown the toiling years so freely spent !

List while they speak :

In life's uneven road

Our willing hands have eased our brother's
load ;

One forehead smoothed, one pang of torture
less,

One peaceful hour a sufferer's couch to
bless,

The smile brought back to fever's parching
lips,

The light restored to reason in eclipse,

Life's treasure rescued like a burning brand
Snatched from the dread destroyer's waste-
ful hand ;

Such were our simple records day by day,
For gains like these we wore our lives away.
In toilsome paths our daily bread we sought,
But bread from heaven attending angels
brought ;

Pain was our teacher, speaking to the heart,
Mother of pity, nurse of pitying art ;

Our lesson learned, we reached the peaceful
shore
Where the pale sufferer asks our aid no
more,—
These gracious words our welcome, our
reward :
Ye served your brothers ; ye have served
your Lord !

RHYMES OF A LIFE-TIME.

FROM the first gleam of morning to the
gray
Of peaceful evening, lo, a life unrolled !
In woven pictures all its changes told,
Its lights, its shadows, every flitting ray,
Till the long curtain, falling, dims the day,
Steals from the dial's disk the sunlight's
gold,
And all the graven hours grow dark and
cold
Where late the glowing blaze of noontide
lay.
Ah ! the warm blood runs wild in youthful
veins,—
Let me no longer play with painted fire ;
New songs for new-born days ! I would
not tire

The listening ears that wait for fresher
strains

In phrase new-moulded, new-forged rhyth-
mic chains,

With plaintive measures from a worn-out
lyre.

August 2, 1881.

BEFORE THE CURFEW.

AT MY FIRESIDE.

ALONE, beneath the darkened sky,
With saddened heart and unstrung
lyre,
I heap the spoils of years gone by,
And leave them with a long-drawn sigh,
Like drift-wood brands that glimmering lie,
Before the ashes hide the fire.

Let not these slow declining days
The rosy light of dawn outlast ;
Still round my lonely hearth it plays,
And gilds the east with borrowed rays,
While memory's mirrored sunset blaze
Flames on the windows of the past.

March 1, 1888.

AT THE SATURDAY CLUB.

THIS is our place of meeting ; opposite
That towered and pillared building :
look at it ;

King's Chapel in the Second George's day,
Rebellion stole its regal name away,—
Stone Chapel sounded better ; but at last
The poisoned name of our provincial past
Had lost its ancient venom ; then once more
Stone Chapel was *King's Chapel* as before.
(So let rechristened North Street, when it
can,

Bring back the days of Marlborough and
Queen Anne !)

Next the old church your wandering eye
will meet—

A granite pile that stares upon the street—
Our civic temple ; slanderous tongues have
said

Its shape was modelled from St. Botolph's
head,

Lofty, but narrow ; jealous passers-by
Say Boston always held her head too high.

Turn half-way round, and let your look
survey

The white façade that gleams across the
way,—

The many-windowed building, tall and wide,
The palace-inn that shows its northern side
In grateful shadow when the sunbeams beat
The granite wall in summer's scorching heat.
This is the place ; whether its name you spell
Tavern, or caravansera, or hotel.

Would I could steal its echoes ! you should
find

Such store of vanished pleasures brought to
mind :

Such feasts ! the laughs of many a jocund
hour

That shook the mortar from King George's
tower ;

Such guests ! What famous names its re-
cord boasts,

Whose owners wander in the mob of ghosts !

Such stories ! Every beam and plank is filled

With juicy wit the joyous talkers spilled,

Ready to ooze, as once the mountain pine

The floors are laid with oozed its turpentine !

A month had flitted since The Club had
met ;

The day came round ; I found the table set,

The waiters lounging round the marblestairs,

Empty as yet the double row of chairs.

I was a full half-hour before the rest,

Alone, the banquet-chamber's single guest.

So from the table's side a chair I took,
And having neither company nor book
To keep me waking, by degrees there crept
A torpor over me,—in short, I slept.

Loosed from its chain, along the wreck-
strown track

Of the dead years my soul goes travelling
back ;

My ghosts take on their robes of flesh ; it
seems

Dreaming is life ; nay, life less life than
dreams,

So real are the shapes that meet my eyes.

They bring no sense of wonder, no surprise,
No hint of other than an earth-born source ;
All seems plain daylight, everything of
course.

How dim the colours are, how poor and
faint

This palette of weak words with which I
paint !

Here sit my friends ; if I could fix them so
As to my eyes they seem, my page would glow
Like a queen's missal, warm as if the brush
Of Titian or Velasquez brought the flush
Of life into their features. *Ay de mi !*

If syllables were pigments, you should see
Such breathing portraitures as never man
Found in the Pitti or the Vatican.

Here sits our POET, Laureate if you will.
Long has he worn the wreath, and wears it
still.

Dead? Nay, not so ; and yet they say his
bust

Looks down on marbles covering royal dust,
Kings by the Grace of God, or Nature's
grace ;

Dead ! No ! Alive ! I see him in his place,
Full-featured, with the bloom that heaven
denies

Her children, pinched by cold New England
skies,

Too often while the nursery's happier few
Win from a summer cloud its roseate hue.

Kind, soft-voiced, gentle, in his eye there
shines

The ray serene that filled Evangeline's.

Modest he seems, not shy ; content to wait
Amid the noisy clamour of debate
The looked-for moment when a peaceful word
Smooths the rough ripples louder tongues
have stirred.

In every tone I mark his tender grace
And all his poems hinted in his face ;
What tranquil joy his friendly presence
gives !

How could I think him dead ? He lives !
He lives !

There, at the table's further end I see
In his old place our Poet's *vis-à-vis*,
The great PROFESSOR, strong, broad-shouldered, square,
In life's rich noontide, joyous, debonair.
His social hour no leaden care alloys,
His laugh rings loud and mirthful as a boy's,—

That lusty laugh the Puritan forgot,—
What ear has heard it and remembers not?
How often, halting at some wide crevasse
Amid the windings of his Alpine pass,
High up the cliffs, the climbing mountaineer,
Listening the far-off avalanche to hear,
Silent, and leaning on his steel-shod staff,
Has heard that cheery voice, that ringing laugh,

From the rude cabin whose nomadic walls
Creep with the moving glacier as it crawls!

How does vast Nature lead her living train

In ordered sequence through that spacious brain,

As in the primal hour when Adam named
The new-born tribes that young creation
claimed!—

How will her realm be darkened, losing thee,

Her darling, whom we call *our* AGASSIZ!

But who is he whose massive frame belies
The maiden shyness of his downcast eyes?
Who broods in silence till, by questions
pressed,
Some answer struggles from his labouring
breast?

An artist Nature meant to dwell apart,
Locked in his studio with a human heart,
Tracking its caverned passions to their lair,
And all its throbbing mysteries laying
bare.

Count it no marvel that he broods alone
Over the heart he studies,—'tis his own;
So in his page, whatever shape it wear,
The Essex wizard's shadowed self is there,—
The great ROMANCER, hid beneath his veil
Like the stern preacher of his sombre tale;
Virile in strength, yet bashful as a girl,
Prouder than Hester, sensitive as Pearl.

From his mild throng of worshippers re-
leased,
Our Concord Delphi sends its chosen priest,
Prophet or poet, mystic, sage, or seer,
By every title always welcome here.
Why that ethereal spirit's frame describe?
You know the race-marks of the Brahmin
tribe,—

The spare, slight form, the sloping shoulders'
droop,

The calm, scholastic mien, the clerkly stoop,
The lines of thought the sharpened features
wear,

Carved by the edge of keen New England
air.

List! for he speaks! As when a king
would choose

The jewels for his bride, he might refuse
This diamond for its flaw,—find that less
bright

Than those, its fellows, and a pearl less white
Than fits her snowy neck, and yet at last
The fairest gems are chosen, and made fast
In golden fetters; so, with light delays
He seeks the fittest word to fill his phrase;
Nor vain nor idle his fastidious quest,
His chosen word is sure to prove the best.

Where in the realm of thought, whose air
is song,

Does he, the Buddha of the West, belong?
He seems a wingèd Franklin, sweetly wise,
Born to unlock the secrets of the skies;
And which the nobler calling,—if 'tis fair
Terrestrial with celestial to compare,—
To guide the storm-cloud's elemental flame,
Or walk the chambers whence the lightning
came,

Amidst the sources of its subtile fire,
And steal their effluence for his lips and
lyre ?

If lost at times in vague aërial flights,
None treads with firmer footstep when he
lights ;

A soaring nature, ballasted with sense,
Wisdom without her wrinkles or pretence,
In every Bible he has faith to read,
And every altar helps to shape his creed.
Ask you what name this prisoned spirit
bears

While with ourselves this fleeting breath it
shares ?

Till angels greet him with a sweeter one
In heaven, on earth we call him EMERSON.

I start ; I wake ; the vision is withdrawn ;
Its figures fading like the stars at dawn ;
Crossed from the roll of life their cherished
names,

And memory's pictures fading in their
frames ;

Yet life is lovelier for these transient gleams
Of buried friendships ; blest is he who
dreams !

OUR DEAD SINGER.

H. W. L.

PRIDE of the sister realm so long our
own,
We claim with her that spotless fame of
thine,
White as her snow and fragrant as her
pine !
Ours was thy birthplace, but in every zone
Some wreath of song thy liberal hand has
thrown
Breathes perfume from its blossoms, that
entwine
Where'er the dewdrops fall, the sunbeams
shine,
On life's long path with tangled cares o'er-
grown.
Can Art thy truthful counterfeit command,—
The silver-haloed features, tranquil,
mild,—
Soften the lips of bronze as when they
smiled,
Give warmth and pressure to the marble
hand ?
Seek the lost rainbow in the sky it spanned !
Farewell, sweet Singer ! Heaven reclaims
its child.

Carved from the block or cast in clinging
mould,

Will grateful Memory fondly try her best
The mortal vesture from decay to wrest ;
His look shall greet us, calm, but ah, how
cold !

No breath can stir the brazen drapery's
fold,

No throb can heave the statue's stony
breast ;

“ He is not here, but risen,” will stand
confest

In all we miss, in all our eyes behold.

How Nature loved him ! On his placid brow,
Thought's ample dome, she set the sacred
sign

That marks the priesthood of her holiest
shrine,

Nor asked a leaflet from the laurel's bough
That envious Time might clutch or disallow,
To prove her chosen minstrel's song
divine.

On many a saddened hearth the evening fire
Burns paler as the children's hour draws
near,—

That joyous hour his song made doubly
dear,—

And tender memories touch the faltering
choir.

He sings no more on earth ; our vain desire
Aches for the voice we loved so long to
hear

In Dorian flute-notes breathing soft and
clear,—

The sweet contralto that could never tire.

Deafened with listening to a harsher strain,
The Mænad's scream, the stark barbarian's
cry,

Still for those soothing, loving tones we
sigh ;

Oh, for our vanished Orpheus once again !

The shadowy silence hears us call in vain !

His lips are hushed ; his song shall never
die.

TWO POEMS TO HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

ON HER SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY, JUNE 14,
1882.

I. AT THE SUMMIT.

SISTER, we bid you welcome,—we who
stand

On the high table-land ;

We who have climbed life's slippery Alpine
 slope,
 And rest, still leaning on the staff of hope,
 Looking along the silent Mer de Glace,
 Leading our footsteps where the dark
 crevasse
 Yawns in the frozen sea we all must pass,—
 Sister, we clasp your hand !

Rest with us in the hour that Heaven has
 lent
 Before the swift descent.
 Look ! the warm sunbeams kiss the glitter-
 ing ice ;
 See ! next the snow-drift blooms the edel-
 weiss ;
 The mated eagles fan the frosty air ;
 Life, beauty, love, around us everywhere,
 And, in their time, the darkening hours
 that bear
 Sweet memories, peace, content.

Thrice welcome ! shining names our missals
 show
 Amid their rubrics' glow,
 But search the blazoned record's starry line,
 What halo's radiance fills the page like
 thine ?

Thou who by some celestial clue couldst find
The way to all the hearts of all mankind,
On thee, already canonised, enshrined,
What more can Heaven bestow !

II. THE WORLD'S HOMAGE.

If every tongue that speaks her praise
For whom I shape my tinkling phrase
Were summoned to the table,
The vocal chorus that would meet
Of mingling accents harsh or sweet,
From every land and tribe, would beat
The polyglots at Babel.

Briton and Frenchman, Swede and Dane,
Turk, Spaniard, Tartar of Ukraine,
Hidalgo, Cossack, Cadi,
High Dutchman and Low Dutchman, too,
The Russian serf, the Polish Jew,
Arab, Armenian, and Mantchoo,
Would shout, " We know the lady ! "

Know her ! Who knows not Uncle Tom
And her he learned his gospel from
Has never heard of Moses ;
Full well the brave black hand we know
That gave to freedom's grasp the hoe
That killed the weed that used to grow
Among the Southern roses.

When Archimedes, long ago,
 Spoke out so grandly, "*dos pou sto*—
 Give me a place to stand on,
 I'll move your planet for you, now,"—
 He little dreamed or fancied how
 The *sto* at last should find its *pou*
 For woman's faith to land on.

Her lever was the wand of art,
 Her fulcrum was the human heart,
 Whence all unfailing aid is ;
 She moved the earth ! Its thunders pealed,
 Its mountains shook, its temples reeled,
 The blood-red fountains were unsealed,
 And Moloch sunk to Hades.

All through the conflict, up and down
 Marched Uncle Tom and Old John Brown,
 One ghost, one form ideal ;
 And which was false and which was true,
 And which was mightier of the two,
 The wisest sibyl never knew,
 For both alike were real.

Sister, the holy maid does well
 Who counts her beads in convent cell,
 Where pale devotion lingers ;

But she who serves the sufferer's needs,
Whose prayers are spelt in loving deeds,
May trust the Lord will count her beads
As well as human fingers.

When Truth herself was Slavery's slave,
Thy hand the prisoned suppliant gave
The rainbow wings of fiction.
And Truth who soared descends to-day
Bearing an angel's wreath away,
Its lilies at thy feet to lay
With Heaven's own benediction.

A WELCOME TO DR. BENJAMIN
APTHORP GOULD

ON HIS RETURN FROM SOUTH AMERICA

AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS DEVOTED TO CATALOGUING THE
STARS OF THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE.

Read at the Dinner given at the Hôtel Vendôme,
May 6, 1885.

ONCE more Orion and the sister Seven
Look on thee from the skies that
hailed thy birth,—
How shall we welcome thee, whose home
was heaven,
From thy celestial wanderings back to
earth?

Science has kept her midnight taper burning
 To greet thy coming with its vestal flame;
 Friendship has murmured, "When art thou
 returning?"

"Not yet! Not yet!" the answering
 message came.

Thine was unstinted zeal, unchilled devotion,
 While the blue realm had kingdoms to
 explore,—
 Patience, like his who ploughed the unfur-
 rowed ocean,
 Till o'er its margin loomed San Salvador.

Through the long nights I see thee ever
 waking,
 Thy footstool earth, thy roof the hemi-
 sphere,
 While with thy griefs our weaker hearts
 are aching,
 Firm as thine equatorial's rock-based pier.

The souls that voyaged the azure depths
 before thee
 Watch with thy tireless vigils, all un-
 seen,—
 Tycho and Kepler bend benignant o'er thee,
 And with his toy-like tube the Floren-
 tine —

He at whose word the orb that bore him
shivered

To find her central sovereignty disowned,
While the wan lips of priest and pontiff
quivered,
Their jargon stilled, their Baal disen-
throned.

Flamsteed and Newton look with brows
unclouded,

Their strife forgotten with its faded
scars,—
(Titans, who found the world of space too
crowded
To walk in peace among its myriad stars)

All cluster round thee,—seers of earliest
ages,

Persians, Ionians, Mizraim's learned kings,
From the dim days of Shinar's hoary sages
To his who weighed the planet's fluid
rings.

And we, for whom the northern heavens are
lighted,

For whom the storm has passed, the sun
has smiled,
Our clouds all scattered, all our stars united,
We claim thee, clasp thee, like a long-
lost child.

Fresh from the spangled vault's o'er-arching
splendour,
Thy lonely pillar, thy revolving dome,
In heartfelt accents, proud, rejoicing, tender,
We bid thee welcome to thine earthly
home !

TO FREDERICK HENRY HEDGE.

AT A DINNER GIVEN HIM ON HIS EIGHTIETH
BIRTHDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1885.

With a bronze statuette of John Bologna's *Mercury*,
presented by a few friends.

FIT emblem for the altar's side,
And him who serves its daily need,
The stay, the solace, and the guide
Of mortal men, whate'er his creed !

Flamen or Auspex, Priest or Bonze,
He feeds the upward-climbing fire,
Still teaching, like the deathless bronze,
Man's noblest lesson,—to aspire.

Hermes lies prone by fallen Jove,
Crushed are the wheels of Krishna's car,
And o'er Dodona's silent grove
Streams the white ray from Bethlehem's
star.

Yet snatched from Time's relentless clutch,
 A godlike shape, that human hands
 Have fired with Art's electric touch,
 The herald of Olympus stands.

Ask not what ore the furnace knew ;
 Love mingled with the flowing mass,
 And lends its own unchanging hue,
 Like gold in Corinth's molten brass.

Take then our gift ; this airy form
 Whose bronze our benedictions gild,
 The hearts of all its givers warm
 With love by freezing years unchilled.

With eye undimmed, with strength unworn,
 Still toiling in your Master's field,
 Before you wave the growths unshorn,
 Their ripened harvest yet to yield.

True servant of the Heavenly Sire,
 To you our tried affection clings,
 Bids you still labour, still aspire,
 But clasps your feet and steals their
 wings.

TO JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

THIS is your month, the month of "perfect days,"

Birds in full song and blossoms all ablaze.

Nature herself your earliest welcome
breathes,

Spreads every leaflet, every bower in-
wreathes ;

Carpets her paths for your returning feet,
Puts forth her best your coming steps to
greet ;

And Heaven must surely find the earth in
tune

When Home, sweet Home, exhales the
breath of June.

These blessed days are waning all too fast,
And June's bright visions mingling with
the past ;

Lilacs have bloomed and faded, and the rose
Has dropped its petals, but the clover blows,
And fills its slender tubes with honeyed
sweets ;

The fields are pearled with milk-white
margarites ;

The dandelion, which you sang of old,
Has lost its pride of place, its crown of gold,

But still displays its feathery-mantled globe,
Which children's breath, or wandering
winds unrobe.

These were your humble friends; your
opened eyes

Nature had trained her common gifts to
prize;

Not Cam or Isis taught you to despise
Charles, with his muddy margin and the
harsh,

Plebeian grasses of the reeking marsh
New England's home-bred scholar, well you
knew

Her soil, her speech, her people, through
and through,

And loved them ever with the love that holds
All sweet, fond memories in its fragrant
folds.

Though far and wide your wingèd words
have flown,

Your daily presence kept you all our own,
Till, with a sorrowing sigh, a thrill of pride,
We heard your summons, and you left our
side

For larger duties and for tasks untried.

How pleased the Spaniards for a while to
claim

This frank Hidalgo with the liquid name,

Who stored their classics on his crowded
shelves
And loved their Calderon as they did them-
selves !
Before his eyes what changing pageants
pass !
The bridal feast how near the funeral mass !
The death-stroke falls,—the Misereres wail ;
The joy-bells ring,—the tear-stained cheeks
unveil,
While, as the playwright shifts his pictured
scene,
The royal mourner crowns his second queen.

From Spain to Britain is a goodly stride,—
Madrid and London long-stretched leagues
divide.

What if I send him, “ Uncle S., says he,”
To my good cousin whom he calls “ J. B.” ?
A nation’s servants go where they are sent,—
He heard his Uncle’s orders, and he went.

By what enchantments, what alluring arts,
Our truthful James led captive British
hearts,—
Whether his shrewdness made their states-
men halt,
Or if his learning found their Dons at fault,
Or if his virtue was a strange surprise,
Or if his wit flung star-dust in their eyes,—

Like honest Yankees we can simply guess ;
 But that he did it all must needs confess.
 England herself without a blush may claim
 Her only conqueror since the Norman came.

Eight years an exile ! What a weary while
 Since first our herald sought the mother isle !
 His snow-white flag no churlish wrong has
 soiled,—
 He left unchallenged, he returns unspoiled.

Here let us keep him, here he saw the light,—
 His genius, wisdom, wit, are ours by right ;
 And if we lose him our lament will be
 We have “ five hundred ”—*not* “ as good as
 he.”

TO JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER,

ON HIS EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY.

1887.

FRIEND, whom thy fourscore winters
 leave more dear
 Than when life's roseate summer on thy
 cheek
 Burned in the flush of manhood's manliest
 year,
 Lonely, how lonely ! is the snowy peak

Thy feet have reached, and mine have
 climbed so near!
 Close on thy footsteps 'mid the landscape
 drear
 I stretch my hand thine answering grasp to
 seek,
 Warm with the love no rippling rhymes
 can speak!
 Look backward! From thy lofty height
 survey
 Thy years of toil, of peaceful victories won,
 Of dreams made real, largest hopes outrun!
 Look forward! Brighter than earth's
 morning ray
 Streams the pure light of Heaven's unsetting
 sun,
 The unclouded dawn of life's immortal day!

PRELUDE TO A VOLUME PRINTED
 IN RAISED LETTERS FOR THE
 BLIND.

DEAR friends, left darkling in the long
 eclipse
 That veils the noonday,—you whose finger-
 tips

A meaning in these ridgy leaves can find
 Where ours go stumbling, senseless, help-
 less, blind,
 This wreath of verse how dare I offer you
 To whom the garden's choicest gifts are due?
 The hues of all its glowing beds are ours,
 Shall you not claim its sweetest-smelling
 flowers?

Nay, those I have I bring you,—at their
 birth
 Life's cheerful sunshine warmed the grateful
 earth ;
 If my rash boyhood dropped some idle seeds,
 And here and there you light on saucy weeds
 Among the fairer growths, remember still
 Song comes of grace, and not of human will :
 We get a jarring note when most we try,
 Then strike the chord we know not how or
 why ;
 Our stately verse with too aspiring art
 Oft overshoots and fails to reach the heart,
 While the rude rhyme one human throb
 endears
 Turns grief to smiles, and softens mirth to
 tears.
 Kindest of critics, ye whose fingers read,
 From Nature's lesson learn the poet's creed ;

The queenly tulip flaunts in robes of flame,
 The wayside seedling scarce a tint may claim,
 Yet may the lowliest leaflets that unfold
 A dewdrop fresh from heaven's own chalice
 hold.

BOSTON TO FLORENCE.

Sent to "The Philological Circle" of Florence for
 its meeting in commemoration of Dante, January 27,
 1881, the anniversary of his first condemnation.

PROUD of her clustering spires, her new-
 built towers,

Our Venice, stolen from the slumbering
 sea,

A sister's kindest greeting wafts to thee,
 Rose of Val d'Arno, queen of all its flowers !
 Thine exile's shrine thy sorrowing love em-
 bowers,

Yet none with truer homage bends the
 knee,

Or stronger pledge of fealty brings, than
 we,

Whose poets make thy dead Immortal ours.
 Lonely the height, but ah, to heaven how
 near !

Dante, whence flowed that solemn verse
 of thine

Like the stern river from its Apennine

Whose name the far-off Scythian thrilled
with fear :
Now to all lands thy deep-toned voice is
dear,
And every language knows the Song
Divine !

AT THE UNITARIAN FESTIVAL,

MARCH 8, 1882.

THE waves unbuild the wasting shore ;
Where mountains towered the billows
sweep,
Yet still their borrowed spoils restore,
And build new empires from the deep.
So while the floods of thought lay waste
The proud domain of priestly creeds,
Its heaven-appointed tides will haste
To plant new homes for human needs.
Be ours to mark with hearts unchilled
The change an outworn Church deplores ;
The legend sinks, but Faith shall build
A fairer throne on new-found shores.

POEM.

FOR THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING
OF HARVARD COLLEGE.

TWICE had the mellowing sun of autumn
crowned
The hundredth circle of his yearly round,
When, as we meet to-day, our fathers met :
That joyous gathering who can e'er forget,
When Harvard's nurslings, scattered far
and wide,
Through mart and village, lake's and ocean's
side,
Came, with one impulse, one fraternal
throng,
And crowned the hours with banquet, speech,
and song ?

Once more revived in fancy's magic glass,
I see in state the long procession pass :
Tall, courtly, leader as by right divine,
Winthrop, our Winthrop, rules the mar-
shalled line,
Still seen in front, as on that far-off day
His ribboned baton showed the column's way.

Not all are gone who marched in manly
pride
And waved their truncheons at their leader's
side ;
Gray, Lowell, Dixwell, who his empire
shared,
These to be with us envious Time has spared.

Few are the faces, so familiar then,
Our eyes still meet amid the haunts of
men ;
Scarce one of all the living gathered there,
Whose unthinned locks betrayed a silver
hair,
Greets us to-day, and yet we seem the same
As our own sires and grandsires, save in
name.
There are the patriarchs, looking vaguely
round
For classmates' faces, hardly known if
found ;
See the cold brow that rules the busy mart ;
Close at its side the pallid son of art,
Whose purchased skill with borrowed mean-
ing clothes,
And stolen hues, the smirking face he
loathes.
Here is the patient scholar ; in his looks
You read the titles of his learned books ;

What classic lore those spidery crow's-feet
speak !

What problems figure on that wrinkled
cheek !

For never thought but left its stiffened
trace,

Its fossil footprint, on the plastic face,

As the swift record of a raindrop stands,

Fixed on the tablet of the hardening sands.

On every face as on the written page

Each year renews the autograph of age ;

One trait alone may wasting years defy,—

The fire still lingering in the poet's eye,

While Hope, the siren, sings her sweetest
strain,—

Non omnis moriar is its proud refrain.

Sadly we gaze upon the vacant chair ;

He who should claim its honours is not
there,—

Otis, whose lips the listening crowd enthrall

That press and pack the floor of Boston's hall.

But Kirkland smiles, released from toil and
care

Since the silk mantle younger shoulders
wear,—

Quincy's, whose spirit breathes the selfsame
fire

That filled the bosom of his youthful sire,

Who for the altar bore the kindled torch
To freedom's temple, dying in its porch.
Three grave professions in their sons appear,
Whose words well studied all well pleased
will hear :

Palfrey, ordained in varied walks to shine,
Statesman, historian, critic, and divine ;
Solid and square behold majestic Shaw,
A mass of wisdom and a mine of law ;
Warren, whose arm the doughtiest warriors
fear,
Asks of the startled crowd to lend its ear,—
Proud of his calling, him the world loves
best,
Not as the coming, but the parting guest.

Look on that form,—with eye dilating scan
The stately mould of nature's kingliest man !
Tower-like he stands in life's unfaded prime ;
Ask you his name ? None asks a second
time !

He from the land his outward semblance
takes,
Where storm-swept mountains watch o'er
slumbering lakes.

See in the impress which the body wears
How its imperial might the soul declares :
The forehead's large expansion, lofty, wide,
That locks unsilvered vainly strive to hide ;

The lines of thought that plough the sober
cheek ;

Lips that betray their wisdom ere they speak
In tones like answers from Dodona's grove ;
An eye like Juno's when she frowns on Jove.
I look and wonder ; will he be content—
This man, this monarch, for the purple
meant—

The meaner duties of his tribe to share,
Clad in the garb that common mortals wear?
Ah, wild Ambition, spread thy restless
wings,
Beneath whose plumes the hidden œstrum
stings ;
Thou whose bold flight would leave earth's
vulgar crowds,
And like the eagle soar above the clouds,
Must feel the pang that fallen angels know
When the red lightning strikes thee from
below !

Less bronze, more silver, mingles in the
mould
Of him whom next my roving eyes behold ;
His, more the scholar's than the statesman's
face,
Proclaims him born of academic race.
Weary his look, as if an aching brain
Left on his brow the frozen prints of pain ;

His voice far-reaching, grave, sonorous,
owns

A shade of sadness in its plaintive tones,
Yet when its breath some loftier thought
inspires

Glowes with a heat that every bosom fires.
Such Everett seems; no chance-sown wild
flower knows

The full-blown charms of culture's double
rose,—

Alas, how soon, by death's unsparing frost,
Its bloom is faded and its fragrance lost!

Two voices, only two, to earth belong,
Of all whose accents met the listening
throng:

Winthrop, alike for speech and guidance
framed,

On that proud day a twofold duty claimed;
One other yet,—remembered or forgot,—

Forgive my silence if I name him not.

Can I believe it? I, whose youthful voice
Claimed a brief gamut,—notes not over
choice,—

Stood undismayed before the solemn throng,
And *propria voce* sung that saucy song
Which even in memory turns my soul
aghast,—

Felix audacia was the verdict cast.

What were the glory of these festal days
Shorn of their grand illumination's blaze?
Night comes at last with all her starry train
To find a light in every glittering pane.
From "Harvard's" windows see the sudden
flash,—
Old "Massachusetts" glares through every
sash;
From wall to wall the kindling splendours
run
Till all is glorious as the noonday sun.

How to the scholar's mind each object brings
What some historian tells, some poet sings!
The good gray teacher whom we all re-
vered—
Loved, honoured, laughed at, and by fresh-
men feared,
As from old "Harvard," where its light
began,
From hall to hall the clustering splendours
ran—
Took down his well-worn Æschylus and read,
Lit by the rays a thousand tapers shed,
How the swift herald crossed the leagues
between
Mycenæ's monarch and his faithless queen;
And thus he read,—my verse but ill displays
The Attic picture, clad in modern phrase:

*On Ida's summit flames the kindling pile,
And Lemnos answers from his rocky isle ;
From Athos next it climbs the reddening skies,
Thence where the watch-towers of Macistus
rise.*

*The sentries of Mesapius in their turn
Bid the dry heath in high-piled masses burn,
Cithæron's crag the crimson billows stain,
Far Ægiplactus joins the fiery train.
Thus the swift courier through the pathless
night
Has gained at length the Arachnæan height,
Whence the glad tidings, borne on wings of
flame,
" Ilium has fallen ! " reach the royal dame.*

So ends the day ; before the midnight stroke
The lights expiring cloud the air with smoke ;
While these the toil of younger hands employ,
The slumbering Grecian dreams of smouldering
Troy.

As to that hour with backward steps I turn,
Midway I pause ; behold a funeral urn !
Ah, sad memorial ! known but all too well
The tale which thus its golden letters tell :

*This dust, once breathing, changed its joyous
life
For toil and hunger, wounds and mortal
strife ;
Love, friendship, learning's all-prevailing
charms,
For the cold bivouac and the clash of arms.
The cause of freedom won, a race enslaved
Called back to manhood, and a nation saved,
These sons of Harvard, falling ere their
prime,
Leave their proud memory to the coming time.*

While in their still retreats our scholars
turn
The mildewed pages of the past, to learn
With endless labour of the sleepless brain
What once has been and ne'er shall be again,
We reap the harvest of their ceaseless toil
And find a fragrance in their midnight oil.
But let a purblind mortal dare the task
The embryo future of itself to ask,
The world reminds him, with a scornful
laugh,
That times have changed since Prospero
broke his staff.
Could all the wisdom of the schools foretell
The dismal hour when Lisbon shook and
fell,

Or name the shuddering night that toppled
down

Our sister's pride, beneath whose mural
crown

Scarce had the scowl forgot its angry lines,
When earth's blind prisoners fired their
fatal mines ?

New realms, new worlds, exulting Science
claims,

Still the dim future unexplored remains ;
Her trembling scales the far-off planet
weigh,

Her torturing prisms its elements betray,—
We know what ores the fires of Sirius melt,
What vaporous metals gild Orion's belt ;
Angels, archangels, may have yet to learn
Those hidden truths our heaven-taught eyes
discern ;

Yet vain is Knowledge, with her mystic
wand,

To pierce the cloudy screen and read
beyond ;

Once to the silent stars the fates were
known,

To us they tell no secrets but their own.

At Israel's altar still we humbly bow,
But where, oh where, are Israel's prophets
now ?

Where is the sibyl with her hoarded leaves?
Where is the charm the weird enchantress
weaves?

No croaking raven turns the auspex pale,
No reeking altars tell the morrow's tale;
The measured footsteps of the Fates are
dumb,

Unseen, unheard, unheralded, they come,
Prophet and priest and all their following
fail.

Who then is left to rend the future's veil?

Who but the poet, he whose nicer sense
No film can baffle with its slight defence,
Whose finer vision marks the waves that
stray,

Felt, but unseen, beyond the violet ray?—
Who, while the storm-wind waits its dark-
ening shroud,

Foretells the tempest ere he sees the cloud,—
Stays not for time his secrets to reveal,
But reads his message ere he breaks the seal.
So Mantua's bard foretold the coming day
Ere Bethlehem's infant in the manger lay;
The promise trusted to a mortal tongue
Found listening ears before the angels sung.
So while his load the creeping pack-horse
galled,

While inch by inch the dull canal-boat
crawled,

Darwin beheld a Titan from "afar
Drag the slow barge or drive the rapid car,"
That panting giant fed by air and flame,
The mightiest forges task their strength to
tame.

Happy the poet ! him no tyrant fact
Holds in its clutches to be chained and
racked ;

Him shall no mouldy document convict,
No stern statistics gravely contradict ;
No rival sceptre threatens his airy throne ;
He rules o'er shadows, but he reigns alone.
Shall I the poet's broad dominion claim
Because you bid me wear his sacred name
For these few moments ? Shall I boldly
clash

My flint and steel, and by the sudden flash
Read the fair vision which my soul de-
scries

Through the wide pupils of its wondering
eyes ?

List then awhile ; the fifty years have sped ;
The third full century's opened scroll is
spread,

Blank to all eyes save his who dimly sees
The shadowy future told in words like
these :

How strange the prospect to my sight
appears,

Changed by the busy hands of fifty years !
Full well I know our ocean-salted Charles,
Filling and emptying through the sands and
marls

That wall his restless stream on either bank,
Not all unlovely when the sedges rank
Lend their coarse veil the sable ooze to
hide

That bares its blackness with the ebbing
tide.

In other shapes to my illumined eyes
Those ragged margins of our stream arise :
Through walls of stone the sparkling waters
flow,

In clearer depths the golden sunsets glow,
On purer waves the lamps of midnight
gleam,

That silver o'er the unpolluted stream.
Along his shores what stately temples rise,
What spires, what turrets, print the sha-
dowed skies !

Our smiling Mother sees her broad domain
Spread its tall roofs along the western plain ;
Those blazoned windows' blushing glories
tell

Of grateful hearts that loved her long and
well :

Yon gilded dome that glitters in the sun
Was Dives' gift,—alas, his only one !
These buttressed walls enshrine a banker's
 name,
That hallowed chapel hides a miser's shame ;
Their wealth they left,—their memory
 cannot fade
Though age shall crumble every stone they
 laid.

Great lord of millions,—let me call thee
 great,
Since countless servants at thy bidding
 wait,—

Richesse oblige : no mortal must be blind
To all but self, or look at human kind
Labouring and suffering,—all its want and
 woe,—

Through sheets of crystal, as a pleasing
 show

That makes life happier for the chosen few
Duty for whom is something not to do.

When thy last page of life at length is
 filled,
What shall thine heirs to keep thy memory
 build ?

Will piles of stone in Auburn's mournful
 shade

Save from neglect the spot where thou art
 laid ?

Nay, deem not thus; the sauntering
stranger's eye

Will pass unmoved thy columned tombstone
by,

No memory wakened, not a teardrop shed,
Thy name uncared for and thy date unread.

But if thy record thou indeed dost prize,
Bid from the soil some stately temple rise,—
Some hall of learning, some memorial shrine,
With names long honoured to associate
thine :

So shall thy fame outlive thy shattered bust
When all around thee slumber in the dust.

Thus England's Henry lives in Eton's towers,
Saved from the spoil oblivion's gulf devours;
Our later records with as fair a fame
Have wreathed each uncrowned benefactor's
name ;

The walls they reared the memories still
retain

That churchyard marbles try to keep in vain.
In vain the delving antiquary tries
To find the tomb where generous Harvard
lies :

Here, here, his lasting monument is found,
Where every spot is consecrated ground !
O'er Stoughton's dust the crumbling stone
decays,

Fast fade its lines of lapidary praise ;

There the wild bramble weaves its ragged nets,
There the dry lichen spreads its gray
 rosettes ;

Still in you walls his memory lives unspent,
Nor asks a braver, nobler monument.

Thus Hollis lives, and Holden, honoured,
 praised,

And good Sir Matthew, in the halls they
 raised ;

Thus live the worthies of these later times,
Who shine in deeds, less brilliant, grouped
 in rhymes.

Say, shall the Muse with faltering steps re-
 treat,

Or dare these names in rhythmic form repeat?

Why not as boldly as from Homer's lips

The long array of Argive battle-ships ?

When o'er our graves a thousand years have
 past

(If to such date our threatened globe shall
 last)

These classic precincts, myriad feet have
 pressed,

Will show on high, in beauteous garlands
 dressed,

Those honoured names that grace our later
 day,—

Weld, Matthews, Sever, Thayer, Austin,
 Gray,

Sears, Phillips, Lawrence, Hemenway,—to
the list
Add Sanders, Sibley,—all the Muse has
missed.

Once more I turn to read the pictured page
Bright with the promise of the coming age.
Ye unborn sons of children yet unborn,
Whose youthful eyes shall greet that far-off
morn,
Blest are those eyes that all undimmed
behold
The sights so longed for by the wise of old.
From high-arched alcoves, through resound-
ing halls,
Clad in full robes majestic Science calls,
Tireless, unsleeping, still at Nature's feet,
Whate'er she utters fearless to repeat,
Her lips at last from every cramp released
That Israel's prophet caught from Egypt's
priest.

I see the statesman, firm, sagacious, bold,
For life's long conflict cast in amplest mould ;
Not his to clamour with the senseless throng
That shouts unshamed, " Our party, right
or wrong,"
But in the patriot's never-ending fight
To side with truth, who changes wrong to
right.

I see the scholar ; in that wondrous time
Men, women, children, all can write in
rhyme.

These four brief lines addressed to youth
inclined

To idle rhyming in his notes I find :

*Who writes in verse that should have writ in
prose*

Is like a traveller walking on his toes ;

*Happy the rhymester who in time has found
The heels he lifts were made to touch the
ground.*

I see gray teachers,—on their work intent,
Their lavished lives, in endless labour spent,
Had closed at last in age and penury
wrecked,

Martyrs, not burned, but frozen in neglect,
Save for the generous hands that stretched
in aid

Of worn-out servants left to die half paid.
Ah, many a year will pass, I thought, ere
we

Such kindly forethought shall rejoice to
see,—

Monarchs are mindful of the sacred debt
That cold republics hasten to forget.

I see the priest,—if such a name he bears
Who without pride his sacred vestment
wears ;
And while the symbols of his tribe I seek
Thus my first impulse bids me think and
speak :

Let not the mitre England's prelate wears
Next to the crown whose regal pomp it
shares,
Though low before it courtly Christians bow,
Leave its red mark on Younger England's
brow.
We love, we honour, the maternal dame,
But let her priesthood wear a modest
name,
While through the waters of the Pilgrim's
bay
A new-born *Mayflower* shows her keels the
way.
Too old grew Britain for her mother's beads,—
Must we be necklaced with her children's
creeds ?
Welcome alike in surplice or in gown
The loyal lieges of the Heavenly Crown !
We greet with cheerful, not submissive,
mien
A sister Church, but not a mitred Queen !

A few brief flutters, and the unwilling
 Muse,
Who feared the flight she hated to refuse,
Shall fold the wings whose gayer plumes
 are shed,
Here where at first her half-fledged pinions
 spread.

Well I remember in the long ago
How in the forest shades of Fontainebleau,
Strained through a fissure in a rocky cell,
One crystal drop with measured cadence fell.
Still, as of old, for ever bright and clear,
The fissured cavern drops its wonted tear,
And wondrous virtue, simple folk aver,
Lies in that teardrop of *la roche qui pleure*.

Of old I wandered by the river's side
Between whose banks the mighty waters
 glide,
Where vast Niagara, hurrying to its fall,
Builds and unbuilds its ever-tumbling wall ;
Oft in my dreams I hear the rush and roar
Of battling floods, and feel the trembling
 shore,

As the huge torrent, girded for its leap,
With bellowing thunders plunges down the
 steep.

Not less distinct, from memory's pictured
 urn,
The gray old rock, the leafy woods, return ;

Robed in their pride the lofty oaks appear,
And once again with quickened sense I hear,
Through the low murmur of the leaves that
 stir,
The tinkling teardrop of *la roche qui pleure*.

So when the third ripe century stands
 complete,
As once again the sons of Harvard meet,
Rejoicing, numerous as the seashore sands,
Drawn from all quarters,—farthest distant
 lands,
Where through the reeds the scaly saurian
 steals,
Where cold Alaska feeds her floundering
 seals,
Where Plymouth, glorying, wears her iron
 crown.
Where Sacramento sees the suns go down ;
Nay, from the cloisters whence the reflux
 tide
Wafts their pale students to our Mother's
 side,—
'Mid all the tumult that the day shall bring,
While all the echoes shout, and roar, and
 ring,
These tinkling lines, oblivion's easy prey,
Once more emerging to the light of day,

Not all unpleasing to the listening ear
Shall wake the memories of this bygone
 year,
Heard as I hear the measured drops that
 flow
From the gray rock of wooded Fontainebleau.

Yet, ere I leave, one loving word for all
Those fresh young lives that wait our
 Mother's call :

 One gift is yours, kind Nature's richest
 dower,—

Youth, the fair bud that holds life's open-
 ing flower,

Full of high hopes no coward doubts enchain,
With all the future throbbing in its brain,
And mightiest instincts which the beating
 heart

Fills with the fire its burning waves impart.

 O joyous youth, whose glory is to dare,—
Thy foot firm planted on the lowest stair,
Thine eye uplifted to the loftiest height
Where fame stands beckoning in the rosy
 light,

Thanks for thy flattering tales, thy fond
 deceits,

Thy loving lies, thy cheerful smiling cheats !
Nature's rash promise every day is broke,—
A thousand acorns breed a single oak,

The myriad blooms that make the orchard
gay

In barren beauty throw their lives away ;
Yet shall we quarrel with the sap that yields
The painted blossoms which adorn the fields
When the fair orchard wears its May-day
suit

Of pink-white petals, for its scanty fruit ?
Thrice happy hours, in hope's illusion
dressed,

In fancy's cradle nurtured and caressed,
Though rich the spoils that ripening years
may bring,

To thee the dewdrops of the Orient cling,—
Not all the dye-stuffs from the vats of truth
Can match the rainbow on the robes of
youth !

Dear unborn children, to our Mother's trust
We leave you, fearless, when we lie in dust :
While o'er these walls the Christian banner
waves

From hallowed lips shall flow the truth that
saves ;

While o'er those portals *Veritas* you read
No church shall bind you with its human
creed.

Take from the past the best its toil has won,
But learn betimes its slavish ruts to shun.

Pass the old tree whose withered leaves are
shed,
Quit the old paths that error loved to tread,
And a new wreath of living blossoms seek,
A narrower pathway up a loftier peak ;
Lose not your reverence, but unmanly fear
Leave far behind you, all who enter here !

As once of old from Ida's lofty height
The flaming signal flashed across the night,
So Harvard's beacon sheds its unspent rays
Till every watch-tower shows its kindling
blaze.
Caught from a spark and fanned by every
gale,
A brighter radiance gilds the roofs of Yale ;
Amherst and Williams bid their flambeaus
shine,
And Bowdoin answers through her groves
of pine ;
O'er Princeton's sands the far reflections
steal,
Where mighty Edwards stamped his iron
heel ;
Nay, on the hill where old beliefs were
bound
Fast as if Styx had girt them nine times
round,

Bursts such a light that trembling souls
inquire

If the whole church of Calvin is on fire !

Well may they ask, for what so brightly
burns

As a dry creed that nothing ever learns ?

Thus link by link is knit the flaming chain

Lit by the torch of Harvard's hallowed plain.

Thy son, thy servant, dearest Mother mine,

Lays this poor offering on thy holy shrine,

An autumn leaflet to the wild winds tost,

Touched by the finger of November's frost,

With sweet, sad memories of that earlier day,

And all that listened to my first-born lay.

With grateful heart this glorious morn I see,—

Would that my tribute worthier were of
thee !

POST-PRANDIAL.

PHI BETA KAPPA.

WENDELL PHILLIPS, ORATOR; CHARLES GODFREY

LELAND, POET. 1881.

“THE Dutch have taken Holland,”—so
the school-boys used to say ;

The Dutch have taken Harvard,—no doubt
of that to-day !

For the Wendells were low Dutchmen, and
all their vrows were Vans ;
And the Breitmanns are high Dutchmen,
and here is honest Hans.

Mynheers, you both are welcome ! Fair
cousin Wendell P.,
Our ancestors were dwellers beside the
Zuyder Zee ;
Both Grotius and Erasmus were countrymen
of we,
And Vondel was our namesake, though he
spelt it with a V.

It is well old Evert Jansen sought a dwell-
ing over sea
On the margin of the Hudson, where he
sampled you and me
Through our grandsires and great-grand-
sires, for you wouldn't quite agree
With the steady-going burghers along the
Zuyder Zee.

Like our Motley's John of Barnveld, you
have always been inclined
To speak,—well,—somewhat frankly,—to
let us know your mind,

And the Mynheers would have told you to
be cautious what you said,
Or else that silver tongue of yours might cost
your precious head.

But we're very glad you've kept it ; it was
always Freedom's own,
And whenever Reason chose it she found a
royal throne ;
You have whacked us with your sceptre ; our
backs were little harmed,
And while we rubbed our bruises we owned
we had been charmed.

And you, our *quasi* Dutchman, what welcome should be yours
For all the wise prescriptions that work
your laughter-cures ?
“ Shake before taking ” ?—not a bit,—the
bottle-cure's a sham ;
Take before shaking, and you'll find it
shakes your diaphragm.

“ Hans Breitmann gif a barty,—where is dot
barty now ? ”
On every shelf where wit is stored to smooth
the careworn brow !

A health to stout Hans Breitmann ! How
long before we see
Another Hans as handsome,—as bright a
man as he !

THE FLÂNEUR.

BOSTON COMMON, DECEMBER 6, 1882.

DURING THE TRANSIT OF VENUS.

I LOVE all sights of earth and skies,
From flowers that glow to stars that
shine ;

The comet and the penny show,
All curious things, above, below,
Hold each in turn my wandering eyes :
I claim the Christian Pagan's line,
Humani nihil,—even so,—
And is not human life divine ?

When soft the western breezes blow,
And strolling youths meet sauntering maids,
I love to watch the stirring trades
Beneath the Vallombrosa shades
Our much-enduring elms bestow ;
The vender and his rhetoric's flow,
The lambent stream of liquid lies ;

The bait he dangles from his line,
The gudgeon and his gold-washed prize.
I halt before the blazoned sign
That bids me linger to admire
The drama time can never tire,
The little hero of the hunch,
With iron arm and soul of fire,
And will that works his fierce desire,—
Untamed, unscared, unconquered Punch !
My ear a pleasing torture finds
In tones the withered sibyl grinds,—
The *dame sans merci's* broken strain,
Whom I erewhile, perchance, have known,
When Orleans filled the Bourbon throne,
A siren singing by the Seine.

But most I love the tube that spies
The orbs celestial in their march ;
That shows the comet as it whisks
Its tail across the planets' disks,
As if to blind their blood-shot eyes ;
Or wheels so close against the sun
We tremble at the thought of risks
Our little spinning ball may run,
To pop like corn that children parch,
From summer something overdone,
And roll, a cinder through the skies.

Grudge not to-day the scanty fee
To him who farms the firmament.

To whom the Milky Way is free ;
Who holds the wondrous crystal key,
The silent Open Sesame
That Science to her sons has lent ;
Who takes his toll, and lifts the bar
That shuts the road to sun and star.
If Venus only comes to time,
(And prophets say she must and shall,)
To-day will hear the tinkling chime
Of many a ringing silver dime,
For him whose optic glass supplies
The crowd with astronomic eyes, —
The Galileo of the Mall.

Dimly the transit morning broke ;
The sun seemed doubting what to do,
As one who questions how to dress,
And takes his doublets from the press,
And halts between the old and new.
Please Heaven he wear his suit of blue,
Or don, at least, his ragged cloak,
With rents that show the azure through !

I go the patient crowd to join
That round the tube my eyes discern,
The last new-comer of the file,
And wait, and wait, a weary while,
And gape, and stretch, and shrug, and smile,

(For each his place must fairly earn,
Hindmost and foremost, in his turn,)
Till hitching onward, pace by pace,
I gain at last the envied place,
And pay the white exiguous coin :
The sun and I are face to face ;
He glares at me, I stare at him ;
And lo ! my straining eye has found
A little spot that, black and round,
Lies near the crimson fire-orb's rim.
O blessed, beauteous evening star,
Well named for her whom earth adores,—
The Lady of the dove-drawn car,—
I know thee in thy white simar ;
But veiled in black, a rayless spot,
Blank as a careless scribbler's blot,
Stripped of thy robe of silvery flame,—
The stolen robe that Night restores
When Day has shut his golden doors,—
I see thee, yet I know thee not ;
And canst thou call thyself the same ?

A black, round spot,—and that is all ;
And such a speck our earth would be
If he who looks upon the stars
Through the red atmosphere of Mars
Could see our little creeping ball
Across the disk of crimson crawl
As I our sister planet see.

And art thou, then, a world like ours,
Flung from the orb that whirled our own
A molten pebble from its zone ?
How must thy burning sands absorb
The fire-waves of the blazing orb,
Thy chain so short, thy path so near
Thy flame-defying creatures hear
The maelstroms of the photosphere !
And is thy bosom decked with flowers
That steal their bloom from scalding
showers ?

And hast thou cities, domes, and towers,
And life, and love that makes it dear,
And death that fills thy tribes with fear ?

Lost in my dream, my spirit soars
Through paths the wandering angels know ;
My all-pervading thought explores
The azure ocean's lucent shores ;
I leave my mortal self below,
As up the star-lit stairs I climb,
And still the widening view reveals
In endless rounds the circling wheels
That build the horologe of time.
New spheres, new suns, new systems gleam ;
The voice no earth-born echo hears
Steals softly on my ravished ears :
I hear them "singing as they shine"—
A mortal's voice dissolves my dream :

My patient neighbour, next in line,
Hints gently there are those who wait.
O guardian of the starry gate,
What coin shall pay this debt of mine?
Too slight thy claim, too small the fee
That bids thee turn the potent key -
The Tuscan's hand has placed in thine.
Forgive my own the small affront,
The insult of the proffered dime;
Take it, O friend, since this thy wont,
But still shall faithful memory be
A bankrupt debtor unto thee,
And pay thee with a grateful rhyme.

AVE.

PRELUDE TO "ILLUSTRATED POEMS."

FULL well I know the frozen hand has
 come
That smites the songs of grove and garden
 dumb,
And chills sad autumn's last chrysanthemum;

Yet would I find one blossom, if I might,
Ere the dark loom that weaves the robe of
 white
Hides all the wrecks of summer out of sight.

Sometimes in dim November's narrowing
day,
When all the season's pride has passed away,
As 'mid the blackened stems and leaves we
stray,

We spy in sheltered nook or rocky cleft
A starry disk the hurrying winds have left,
Of all its blooming sisterhood bereft :

Some pansy, with its wondering baby eyes—
Poor wayside nursling!—fixed in blank
surprise
At the rough welcome of unfriendly skies ;

Or golden daisy,—will it dare disclaim
The lion's tooth, to wear this gentler name?
Or blood-red salvia, with its lips aflame :

The storms have stripped the lily and the
rose,
Still on its cheek the flush of summer glows,
And all its heart-leaves kindle as it blows.

So had I looked some bud of song to find
The careless winds of autumn left behind,
With these of earlier seasons' growth to
bind.

Ah me ! my skies are dark with sudden grief,
 A flower lies faded on my garnered sheaf ;
 Yet let the sunshine gild this virgin leaf,—

The joyous, blessed sunshine of the past,
 Still with me, though the heavens are over-
 cast,—

The light that shines while life and memory
 last.

Go, pictured rhymes, for loving readers
 meant ;

Bring back the smiles your jocund morning
 lent,

And warm their hearts with sunbeams yet
 unspent !

BEVERLY FARMS, July 24, 1884.

KING'S CHAPEL.

READ AT THE TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY.

IS it a weanling's weakness for the past
 That in the stormy, rebel-breeding town,
 Swept clean of relics by the levelling blast,
 Still keeps our gray old chapel's name of
 " King's,"

Still to its outworn symbols fondly clings,—
 Its unchurched mitres and its empty
 crown ?

Poor harmless emblems ! All has shrunk
away

That made them gorgons in the patriot's
eyes ;

The priestly plaything harms us not to-day ;

The gilded crown is but a pleasing show,

An old-world heirloom, left from long ago,

Wreck of the past that memory bids us
prize.

Lightly we glance the fresh-cut marbles o'er ;

Those two of earlier date our eyes enthral :

The proud old Briton's by the western door,

And hers, the Lady of Colonial days,

Whose virtues live in long-drawn classic
phrase,—

The fair Francesca of the southern wall.

Ay ! those were goodly men that Reynolds
drew,

And stately dames our Copley's canvas
holds,

To their old Church, their Royal Master, true,

Proud of the claim their valiant sires had
earned,

That "gentle blood," not lightly to be
spurned,

Save by the churl ungenerous Nature
moulds.

All vanished ! It were idle to complain
That ere the fruits shall come the flowers
must fall ;
Yet somewhat we have lost amidst our gain,
Some rare ideals time may not restore,—
The charm of courtly breeding, seen no more,
And reverence, dearest ornament of all.

Thus musing, to the western wall I came,
Departing : lo ! a tablet fresh and fair,
Where glistened many a youth's remem-
bered name
In golden letters on the snow-white stone,—
Young lives these aisles and arches once
have known,
Their country's bleeding altar might not
spare.

These died that we might claim a soil un-
stained,
Save by the blood of heroes ; their be-
quests
A realm unsevered and a race unchained.
Has purer blood through Norman veins
come down
From the rough knights that clutched the
Saxon's crown
Than warmed the pulses in these faithful
breasts ?

These, too, shall live in history's deathless
page,
High on the slow-wrought pedestals of
fame,
Ranged with the heroes of remoter age ;
They could not die who left their nation
free,
Firm as the rock, unfettered as the sea,
Its heaven unshadowed by the cloud of
shame.

While on the storied past our memory dwells,
Our grateful tribute shall not be denied,—
The wreath, the cross of rustling immortelles;
And willing hands shall clear each darken-
ing bust,
As year by year sifts down the clinging dust
On Shirley's beauty and on Vassall's pride.

But for our own, our loved and lost, we bring
With throbbing hearts and tears that still
must flow,
In full-heaped hands, the opening flowers of
spring,
Lilies half-blown, and budding roses, red
As their young cheeks, before the blood was
shed
That lent their morning bloom its gene-
rous glow.

Ah, who shall count a rescued nation's debt,
Or sum in words our martyrs' silent claims?
Who shall our heroes' dread exchange forget,—
All life, youth, hope, could promise to allure
For all that soul could brave or flesh endure?
They shaped our future; we but carve
their names.

HYMN

FOR THE SAME OCCASION.

SUNG BY THE CONGREGATION TO THE TUNE OF TALLIS'S
EVENING HYMN.

O'ERSHADOWED by the walls that climb,
Piled up in air by living hands,
A rock amid the waves of time,
Our gray old house of worship stands.

High o'er the pillared aisles we love
The symbols of the past look down;
Unharm'd, unharmed, throned above,
Behold the mitre and the crown!

Let not our younger faith forget
The loyal souls that held them dear;
The prayers we read their tears have wet,
The hymns we sing they loved to hear.

The memory of their earthly throne
Still to our holy temple clings,
But here the kneeling suppliants own
One only Lord, the King of kings.

Hark ! while our hymn of grateful praise
The solemn echoing vaults prolong,
The far-off voice of earlier days
Blends with our own in hallowed song :

To Him who ever lives and reigns,
Whom all the hosts of heaven adore,
Who lent the life His breath sustains,
Be glory now and evermore !

HYMN.—THE WORD OF PROMISE

(by supposition).

An Hymn set forth to be sung by the Great Assembly
at Newtown [Mass.], Mo. 12. 1. 1636.

[Written by OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, eldest son of
Rev. ABIEL HOLMES, eighth Pastor of the First
Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts.]

LORD, Thou hast led us as of old
Thine Arm led forth the chosen Race
Through Foes that raged, through Floods
that roll'd,
To Canaan's far-off Dwelling-Place.

Here is Thy bounteous Table spread,
Thy Manna falls on every Field,
Thy Grace our hungering Souls hath fed,
Thy Might hath been our Spear and Shield.

Lift high Thy Buckler, Lord of Hosts !
Guard Thou Thy Servants, Sons and Sires,
While on the Godless heathen Coasts
They light Thine Israel's Altar-fires !

The salvage Wilderness remote
Shall hear Thy Works and Wonders sung ;
So from the Rock that Moses smote
The Fountain of the Desart sprung.

Soon shall the slumbering Morn awake,
From wandering Stars of Errour freed,
When Christ the Bread of Heaven shall break
For Saints that own a common Creed.

The Walls that fence His Flocks apart
Shall crack and crumble in Decay,
And every Tongue and every Heart
Shall welcome in the new-born Day.

Then shall His glorious Church rejoice
His Word of Promise to recall,—
ONE SHELTERING FOLD, ONE SHEPHERD'S
VOICE,
ONE GOD AND FATHER OVER ALL !

HYMN.

READ AT THE DEDICATION OF THE OLIVER
WENDELL HOLMES HOSPITAL AT HUDSON,
WISCONSIN.

JUNE 7, 1877.

ANGEL of love, for every grief
Its soothing balm thy mercy brings,
For every pang its healing leaf,
For homeless want, thine outspread wings.

Enough for thee the pleading eye,
The knitted brow of silent pain ;
The portals open to a sigh
Without the clank of bolt or chain.

Who is our brother ? He that lies
Left at the wayside, bruised and sore :
His need our open hand supplies,
His welcome waits him at our door.

Not ours to ask in freezing tones
His race, his calling, or his creed ;
Each heart the tie of kinship owns,
When those are human veins that bleed.

Here stand the champions to defend
From every wound that flesh can feel ;
Here science, patience, skill, shall blend
To save, to calm, to help, to heal.

Father of Mercies ! Weak and frail,
Thy guiding hand Thy children ask ;
Let not the Great Physician fail
To aid us in our holy task.

Source of all truth, and love, and light,
That warm and cheer our earthly days,
Be ours to serve Thy will aright,
Be Thine the glory and the praise !

ON THE DEATH OF PRESIDENT GARFIELD.

I.

FALLEN with autumn's falling leaf
Ere yet his summer's noon was past,
Our friend, our guide, our trusted chief,—
What words can match a woe so vast !

And whose the chartered claim to speak
The sacred grief where all have part,
Where sorrow saddens every cheek
And broods in every aching heart ?

Yet Nature prompts the burning phrase
 That thrills the hushed and shrouded hall,
 The loud lament, the sorrowing praise,
 The silent tear that love lets fall.

In loftiest verse, in lowliest rhyme,
 Shall strive unblamed the minstrel choir,—
 The singers of the new-born time,
 And trembling age with outworn lyre.

No room for pride, no place for blame,—
 We fling our blossoms on the grave,
 Pale,—scentless,—faded,—all we claim,
 This only,—what we had we gave.

Ah, could the grief of all who mourn
 Blend in one voice its bitter cry,
 The wail to heaven's high arches borne
 Would echo through the caverned sky.

II.

O happiest land, whose peaceful choice
 Fills with a breath its empty throne!
 God, speaking through thy people's voice,
 Has made that voice for once His own.

No angry passion shakes the state
 Whose weary servant seeks for rest;
 And who could fear that scowling hate
 Would strike at that unguarded breast?

He stands, unconscious of his doom,
 In manly strength, erect, serene ;
 Around him Summer spreads her bloom ;
 He falls,—what horror clothes the scene !

How swift the sudden flash of woe
 Where all was bright as childhood's dream !
 As if from heaven's ethereal bow
 Had leaped the lightning's arrowy gleam.

Blot the foul deed from history's page ;
 Let not the all-betraying sun
 Blush for the day that stains an age
 When murder's blackest wreath was won.

III.

Pale on his couch the sufferer lies,
 The weary battle-ground of pain :
 Love tends his pillow ; Science tries
 Her every art, alas ! in vain.

The strife endures how long ! how long !
 Life, death, seem balanced in the scale,
 While round his bed a viewless throng
 Await each morrow's changing tale.

In realms the desert ocean parts
 What myriads watch with tear-filled eyes,
 His pulse-beats echoing in their hearts,
 His breathings counted with their sighs !

Slowly the stores of life are spent,
Yet hope still battles with despair ;
Will Heaven not yield when knees are bent ;
Answer, O Thou that hearest prayer !

But silent is the brazen sky ;
On sweeps the meteor's threatening train,
Unswerving Nature's mute reply,
Bound in her adamantine chain.

Not ours the verdict to decide
Whom death shall claim or skill shall save ;
The hero's life though Heaven denied,
It gave our land a martyr's grave.

Nor count the teaching vainly sent
How human hearts their griefs may
share,—
The lesson woman's love has lent,
What hope may do, what faith can bear !

Farewell ! the leaf-strown earth enfolds
Our stay, our pride, our hopes, our fears,
And autumn's golden sun beholds
A nation bowed, a world in tears.

THE GOLDEN FLOWER.

WHEN Advent dawns with lessening
days,
While earth awaits the angels' hymn ;
When bare as branching coral sways
In whistling winds each leafless limb ;
When spring is but a spendthrift's dream,
And summer's wealth a wasted dower,
Nor dews nor sunshine may redeem,—
Then autumn coins his Golden Flower.

Soft was the violet's vernal hue,
Fresh was the rose's morning red,
Full-orbed the stately dahlia grew,—
All gone ! their short-lived splendours shed.
The shadows, lengthening, stretch at noon ;
The fields are stripped, the groves are
dumb ;
The frost-flowers greet the icy moon,—
Then blooms the bright chrysanthemum.

The stiffening turf is white with snow,
Yet still its radiant disks are seen
Where soon the hallowed morn will show
The wreath and cross of Christmas green ;

As if in autumn's dying days
It heard the heavenly song afar,
And opened all its glowing rays,
The herald lamp of Bethlehem's star.

Orphan of summer, kindly sent
To cheer the fading year's decline,
In all that pitying Heaven has lent
No fairer pledge of hope than thine.
Yes ! June lies hid beneath the snow,
And winter's unborn heir shall claim
For every seed that sleeps below
A spark that kindles into flame.

Thy smile the scowl of winter braves
Last of the bright-robed, flowery train,
Soft sighing o'er the garden graves,
"Farewell ! farewell ! we meet again !"
So may life's chill November bring
Hope's golden flower, the last of all,
Before we hear the angels sing
Where blossoms never fade and fall !

HAIL, COLUMBIA !

1798.

THE FIRST VERSE OF THE SONG.

BY JOSEPH HOPKINSON.

"**H**AIL, Columbia ! Happy Land !
Hail, ye heroes, heaven-born band,
Who fought and bled in Freedom's cause,
Who fought and bled in Freedom's cause,
And when the storm of war was gone
Enjoy'd the peace your valour won.
Let independence be our boast,
Ever mindful what it cost ;
Ever grateful for the prize,
Let its altar reach the skies.

" Firm—united—let us be,
Rallying round our Liberty ;
As a band of brothers join'd,
Peace and safety we shall find."

.

ADDITIONAL VERSES.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE
FOR THE CONSTITUTIONAL CENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION AT PHILADELPHIA, 1887.

LOOK our ransomed shores around,
Peace and safety we have found !
Welcome, friends who once were foes !
Welcome, friends who once were foes,

To all the conquering years have gained,—
A nation's rights, a race unchained !
Children of the day new-born,
Mindful of its glorious morn,
Let the pledge our fathers signed
Heart to heart for ever bind !

While the stars of heaven shall burn,
While the ocean tides return,
Ever may the circling sun
Find the Many still are One !

Graven deep with edge of steel,
Crowned with Victory's crimson seal,
All the world their names shall read !
All the world their names shall read,
Enrolled with his, the Chief that led
The hosts whose blood for us was shed.
Pay our sires their children's debt,
Love and honour, nor forget
Only Union's golden key
Guards the Ark of Liberty !

While the stars of heaven shall burn,
While the ocean tides return,
Ever may the circling sun
Find the Many still are One !

Hail, Columbia ! strong and free,
Throned in hearts from sea to sea !
Thy march triumphant still pursue !
Thy march triumphant still pursue
With peaceful stride from zone to zone,
Till Freedom finds the world her own !

Blest in Union's holy ties,
Let our grateful song arise,
Every voice its tribute lend,
All in loving chorus blend !

While the stars in heaven shall burn,
While the ocean tides return,
Ever shall the circling sun
Find the Many still are One !

POEM.

FOR THE DEDICATION OF THE FOUNTAIN AT
STRATFORD-ON-AVON, PRESENTED BY
GEORGE W. CHILDS, OF PHILADELPHIA.

WELCOME, thrice welcome is thy silvery
gleam,
Thou long-imprisoned stream !
Welcome the tinkle of thy crystal beads
As plashing raindrops to the flowery meads,
As summer's breath to Avon's whispering
reeds !

From rock-walled channels, drowned in
rayless night,
Leap forth to life and light ;
Wake from the darkness of thy troubled
dream,
And greet with answering smile the morn-
ing's beam !

No purer lymph the white-limbed Naiad
knows
Than from thy chalice flows ;
Not the bright spring of Afric's sunny shores,
Starry with spangles washed from golden
ores,
Nor glassy stream Bandusia's fountain pours,
Nor wave translucent where Sabrina fair
Braids her loose-flowing hair,
Nor the swift current, stainless as it rose
Where chill Arveiron steals from Alpine
snows.

Here shall the traveller stay his weary feet
To seek thy calm retreat ;
Here at high noon the brown-armed reaper
rest ;
Here, when the shadows, lengthening from
the west,
Call the mute song-bird to his leafy nest,

Matron and maid shall chat the cares away
That brooded o'er the day,
While flocking round them troops of children meet,
And all the arches ring with laughter sweet.

Here shall the steed, his patient life who spends
In toil that never ends,
Hot from his thirsty tramp o'er hill and plain,
Plunge his red nostrils, while the torturing rein
Drops in loose loops beside his floating mane ;
Nor the poor brute that shares his master's lot
Find his small needs forgot,—
Truest of humble, long-enduring friends,
Whose presence cheers, whose guardian care defends !

Here lark and thrush and nightingale shall sip,
And skimming swallows dip,
And strange shy wanderers fold their lustrous plumes
Fragrant from bowers that lent their sweet perfumes
Where Pæstum's rose or Persia's lilac blooms ;

Here from his cloud the eagle stoop to drink
At the full basin's brink,
And whet his beak against its rounded lip,
His glossy feathers glistening as they drip.

Here shall the dreaming poet linger long,
Far from his listening throng,—
Nor lute nor lyre his trembling hand shall
bring;
Here no frail Muse shall imp her crippled
wing,
No faltering minstrel strain his throat to
sing!
These hallowed echoes who shall dare to
claim
Whose tuneless voice would shame,
Whose jangling chords with jarring notes
would wrong
The nymphs that heard the Swan of Avon's
song?

What visions greet the pilgrim's raptured
eyes!
What ghosts made real rise!
The dead return,—they breathe,—they live
again,
Joined by the host of Fancy's airy train,
Fresh from the springs of Shakespeare's
quickenings brain!

The stream that slakes the soul's diviner
thirst

Here found the sunbeams first ;

Rich with his fame, not less shall memory
prize

The gracious gift that humbler wants sup-
plies.

O'er the wide waters reached the hand that
gave

To all this bounteous wave,

With health and strength and joyous beauty
fraught ;

Blest be the generous pledge of friendship,
brought

From the far home of brothers' love, un-
bought !

Long may fair Avon's fountain flow, enrolled
With storied shrines of old,

Castalia's spring, Egeria's dewy cave,

And Horeb's rock the God of Israel clave !

Land of our fathers, ocean makes us two,

But heart to heart is true !

Proud is your towering daughter in the
West,

Yet in her burning life-blood reign confest
Her mother's pulses beating in her breast.

This holy fount, whose rills from heaven descend,
Its gracious drops shall lend,—
Both foreheads bathed in that baptismal dew,
And love make one the old home and the new !

August 29, 1887.

TO THE POETS WHO ONLY READ
AND LISTEN.

WHEN evening's shadowy fingers fold
The flowers of every hue,
Some shy, half-opened bud will hold
Its drop of morning's dew.

Sweeter with every sunlit hour
The trembling sphere has grown,
Till all the fragrance of the flower
Becomes at last its own.

We that have sung perchance may find
Our little meed of praise,
And round our pallid temples bind
The wreath of fading bays :

Ah, Poet, who hast never spent
Thy breath in idle strains,
For thee the dewdrop morning lent
Still in thy heart remains ;

Unwasted, in its perfumed cell
It waits the evening gale ;
Then to the azure whence it fell
Its lingering sweets exhale.

FOR THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW
CITY LIBRARY, BOSTON.

PROUDLY, beneath her glittering dome,
Our three-hilled city greets the morn ;
Here Freedom found her virgin home,—
The Bethlehem where her babe was born.

The lordly roofs of traffic rise
Amid the smoke of household fires ;
High o'er them in the peaceful skies
Faith points to heaven her clusteringspires.

Can Freedom breathe if ignorance reign ?
Shall Commerce thrive where anarchs rule ?
Will Faith her half-fledged brood retain
If darkening counsels cloud the school ?

Let in the light ! from every age
 Some gleams of garnered wisdom pour,
 And, fixed on thought's electric page,
 Wait all their radiance to restore.

Let in the light ! in diamond mines
 Their gems invite the hand that delves ;
 So learning's treasured jewels shine
 Ranged on the alcove's ordered shelves.

From history's scroll the splendour streams,
 From science leaps the living ray ;
 Flashed from the poet's glowing dreams
 The opal fires of fancy play.

Let in the light ! these windowed walls
 Shall brook no shadowing colonnades,
 But day shall flood the silent halls
 Till o'er yon hills the sunset fades.

Behind the ever open gate
 No pikes shall fence a crumbling throne,
 No lackeys cringe, no courtiers wait,—
 This palace is the people's own !

Heirs of our narrow-girdled past,
 How fair the prospect we survey,
 Where howled unheard the wintry blast,
 And rolled unchecked the storm-swept
 bay !

These chosen precincts, set apart
For learned toil and holy shrines,
Yield willing homes to every art
That trains, or strengthens, or refines.

Here shall the sceptred mistress reign
Who heeds her meanest subject's call,
Sovereign of all their vast domain,
The queen, the handmaid of them all !

November 26, 1888.

FOR THE WINDOW IN ST.
MARGARET'S

IN MEMORY OF A SON OF ARCHDEACON FARRAR.

A FAR he sleeps whose name is graven
here,
Where loving hearts his early doom de-
plore ;
Youth, promise, virtue, all that made him
dear
Heaven lent, earth borrowed, sorrowing
to restore.

BOSTON, April 12, 1891.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

1819-1891.

THOU shouldst have sung the swan-song
for the choir
That filled our groves with music till the
day
Lit the last hilltop with its reddening fire,
And evening listened for thy lingering lay.

But thou hast found thy voice in realms afar
Where strains celestial blend their notes
with thine ;
Some cloudless sphere beneath a happier
star
Welcomes the bright-winged spirit we
resign.

How nature mourns thee in the still retreat
Where passed in peace thy love-enchanted
hours !
Where shall she find an eye like thine to
greet
Spring's earliest footprints on her opening
flowers ?

Have the pale wayside weeds no fond regret
For him who read the secrets they enfold?
Shall the proud spangles of the field forget
The verse that lent new glory to their gold?

And ye whose carols wooed his infant ear,
Whose chants with answering woodnotes
he repaid,
Have ye no song his spirit still may hear
From Elmwood's vaults of overarching
shade?

Friends of his studious hours, who thronged
to teach
The deep-read scholar all your varied lore,
Shall he no longer seek your shelves to reach
The treasure missing from his world-wide
store?

This singer whom we long have held so dear
Was Nature's darling, shapely, strong, and
fair;
Of keenest wit, of judgment crystal-clear,
Easy of converse, courteous, debonair,
Fit for the loftiest or the lowest lot,
Self-poised, imperial, yet of simplest ways;
At home alike in castle or in cot,
True to his aim, let others blame or praise.

Freedom he found an heirloom from his
sires ;

Song, letters, statecraft, shared his years
in turn ;

All went to feed the nation's altar-fires

Whose mourning children wreath his
funeral urn.

He loved New England,—people, language,
soil,

Unweaned by exile from her arid breast.

Farewell awhile, white-handed son of toil,

Go with her brown-armed labourers to
thy rest.

Peace to thy slumber in the forest shade !

Poet and patriot, every gift was thine ;

Thy name shall live while summers bloom
and fade,

And grateful Memory guard thy leafy
shrine !

POEMS FROM OVER THE TEACUPS.

TO THE ELEVEN LADIES

WHO PRESENTED ME WITH A SILVER LOVING
CUP ON THE TWENTY-NINTH OF AUGUST,
MDCCCLXXXIX.

“**W**HO gave this cup?” The secret thou
wouldst steal
Its brimming flood forbids it to reveal :
No mortal’s eye shall read it till he first
Cool the red throat of thirst.

If on the golden floor one draught remain,
Trust me, thy careful search will be in vain ;
Not till the bowl is emptied shalt thou know
The names enrolled below.

Deeper than Truth lies buried in her well
Those modest names the graven letters spell
Hide from the sight ; but wait, and thou
shalt see
Who the good angels be

Whose bounty glistens in the beauteous gift
That friendly hands to loving lips shall lift:
Turn the fair goblet when its floor is dry,—
 Their names shall meet thine eye.

Count thou their number on the beads of
 Heaven :
Alas ! the clustered Pleiads are but seven ;
Nay, the nine sister Muses are too few,—
 The Graces must add two.

“For whom this gift?” For one who all
 too long
Clings to his bough among the groves of song ;
Autumn’s last leaf, that spreads its faded
 wing
 To greet a second spring.

Dear friends, kind friends, whate’er the cup
 may hold,
Bathing its burnished depths, will change
 to gold :
Its last bright drop let thirsty Mænads drain,
 — Its fragrance will remain.

Better love’s perfume in the empty bowl
Than wine’s nepenthe for the aching soul ;
Sweeter than song that ever poet sung,
 It makes an old heart young !

THE PEAU DE CHAGRIN OF STATE
STREET.

HOW beauteous is the bond ·
In the manifold array
Of its promises to pay,
While the eight per cent. it gives
And the rate at which one lives
Correspond !

But at last the bough is bare
Where the coupons one by one
Through their ripening days have run,
And the bond, a beggar now,
Seeks investment anyhow,
Anywhere !

CACOETHES SCRIBENDI.

IF all the trees in all the woods were men ;
And each and every blade of grass a
pen ;
If every leaf on every shrub and tree
Turned to a sheet of foolscap ; every sea
Were changed to ink, and all earth's living
tribes
Had nothing else to do but act as scribes,

And for ten thousand ages, day and night,
The human race should write, and write,
 and write,
Till all the pens and paper were used up,
And the huge inkstand was an empty cup,
Still would the scribblers cluster round its
 brink
Call for more pens, more paper, and more
 ink.

THE ROSE AND THE FERN.

LADY, life's sweetest lesson wouldst thou
 learn,
 Come thou with me to Love's enchanted
 bower :
High overhead the trellised roses burn ;
Beneath thy feet behold the feathery fern,—
 A leaf without a flower.

What though the rose leaves fall? They
 still are sweet,
 And have been lovely in their beauteous
 prime,
While the bare frond seems ever to repeat,
“For us no bud, no blossom, wakes to greet
 The joyous flowering time!”

Heed thou the lesson. Life has leaves to tread
And flowers to cherish; summer round
thee glows ;
Wait not till autumn's fading robes are shed,
But while its petals still are burning red
Gather life's full-blown rose !

I LIKE YOU AND I LOVE YOU.

I LIKE YOU met I LOVE YOU, face to face ;
The path was narrow, and they could
not pass.

I LIKE YOU smiled ; I LOVE YOU cried,
Alas !

And so they halted for a little space.

"Turn thou and go before," I LOVE YOU said,
"Down the green pathway, bright with
many a flower ;
Deep in the valley, lo ! my bridal bower
Awaits thee." But I LIKE YOU shook his
head.

Then while they lingered on the span-wide
shelf

That shaped a pathway round the rocky
ledge,

I LIKE YOU bared his icy dagger's edge,
And first he slew I LOVE YOU,—then himself.

LA MAISON D'OR.

(BAR HARBOUR.)

FROM this fair home behold on either
side

The restful mountains or the restless sea :
So the warm sheltering walls of life divide
Time and its tides from still eternity.

Look on the waves : their stormy voices teach
That not on earth may toil and struggle
cease.

Look on the mountains : better far than
speech
Their silent promise of eternal peace.

TOO YOUNG FOR LOVE.

TOO young for love?
Ah, say not so !

Tell reddening rose-buds not to blow !
Wait not for spring to pass away,—
Love's summer months begin with May !

Too young for love ?

Ah, say not so !

Too young ? Too young ?

Ah, no ! no ! no !

Too young for love?

Ah, say not so,

To practise all love learned in May.

June soon will come with lengthened day

While daisies bloom and tulips glow!

Too young for love?

Ah, say not so!

Too young? Too young?

Ah, no! no! no!

THE BROOMSTICK TRAIN; OR, THE RETURN OF THE WITCHES.

LOOK out! Look out, boys! Clear the
track!

The witches are here! They've all come
back!

They hanged them high,—No use! No use!

What cares a witch for a hangman's noose?

They buried them deep, but they wouldn't
lie still,

For cats and witches are hard to kill;

They swore they shouldn't and wouldn't
die,—

Books said they did, but they lie! they lie!

A couple of hundred years, or so,

They had knocked about in the world below,

When an Essex Deacon dropped in to call,
And a homesick feeling seized them all ;
For he came from a place they knew full
 well,

And many a tale he had to tell.

They longed to visit the haunts of men,
To see the old dwellings they knew again,
And ride on their broomsticks all around
Their wide domain of unhallowed ground.

In Essex county there 's many a roof
Well known to him of the cloven hoof ;
The small square windows are full in view
Which the midnight hags went sailing
 through,

On their well-trained broomsticks mounted
 high,

Seen like shadows against the sky ;
Crossing the track of owls and bats,
Hugging before them their coal-black cats.

Well did they know, those gray old wives,
The sights we see in our daily drives :
Shimmer of lake and shine of sea,
Browne's bare hill with its lonely tree,
(It wasn't then as we see it now,
With one scant scalp-lock to shade its brow ;)
Dusky nooks in the Essex woods,
Dark, dim, Dante-like solitudes,

Where the tree-toad watches the sinuous
snake

Glide through his forests of fern and brake ;
Ipswich River ; its old stone bridge ;
Far off Andover's Indian Ridge,
And many a scene where history tells
Some shadow of bygone terror dwells,—
Of "Norman's Woe" with its tale of dread,
Of the Screeching Woman of Marblehead
(The fearful story that turns men pale :
Don't bid me tell it,—my speech would fail).

Who would not, will not, if he can,
Bathe in the breezes of fair Cape Ann,—
Rest in the bowers her bays enfold,
Loved by the sachems and squaws of old ?
Home where the white magnolias bloom,
Sweet with the bayberry's chaste perfume,
Hugged by the woods and kissed by the sea !
Where is the Eden like to thee ?
For that "couple of hundred years, or so,"
There had been no peace in the world be-
low ;

The witches still grumbling, "It isn't fair ;
Come, give us a taste of the upper air !
We've had enough of your sulphur springs,
And the evil odour that round them clings ;
We long for a drink that is cool and nice,—
Great buckets of water with Wenham ice ;

We've served you well up-stairs, you know;
You're a good old—fellow—come, let us go!"

I don't feel sure of his being good,
But he happened to be in a pleasant mood,—
As fiends with their skins full sometimes
are,—

(He'd been drinking with "roughs" at a
Boston bar)

So what does he do but up and shout
To a graybeard turnkey, "Let 'em out!"

To mind his orders was all he knew;
The gates swung open, and out they flew.
"Where are our broomsticks?" the bel-
dams cried.

"Here are your broomsticks," an imp re-
plied.

"They've been in—the place you know—
so long

They smell of brimstone uncommon strong;
But they've gained by being left alone,—
Just look, and you'll see how tall they've
grown."

"And where is my cat?" a vixen squalled.

"Yes, where are our cats?" the witches
bawled,

And began to call them all by name:

As fast as they called the cats, they came:

There was bob-tailed Tommy and long-tailed Tim,
And wall-eyed Jacky and green-eyed Jim,
And Splay-foot Benny and slim-legged Beau,
And Skinny and Squally, and Jerry and Joe,
And many another that came at call,—
It would take too long to count them all.
All black,—one could hardly tell which
was which,
But every cat knew his own old witch ;
And she knew hers as hers knew her,—
Ah, didn't they curl their tails and purr !

No sooner the withered hags were free
Than out they swarmed for a midnight
spree ;
I couldn't tell all they did in rhymes,
But the Essex people had dreadful times.
The Swampscott fishermen still relate
How a strange sea-monster stole their bait ;
How their nets were tangled in loops and
knots,
And they found dead crabs in their lobster-
pots.
Poor Danvers grieved for her blasted crops,
And Wilmington mourned over mildewed
hops.
A blight played havoc with Beverly beans,—
It was all the work of those hateful queans !

A dreadful panic began at "Prides,"
Where the witches stopped in their mid-
night rides,
And there rose strange rumours and vague
alarms
'Mid the peaceful dwellers at Beverly Farms.

Now when the Boss of the Beldams found
That without his leave they were ramping
round,
He called,—they could hear him twenty
miles,
From Chelsea beach to the Misery Isles ;
The deafest old granny knew his tone
Without the trick of the telephone.
"Come here, you witches ! Come here !"
says he,—
"At your games of old, without asking me !
I'll give you a little job to do
That will keep you stirring, you godless
crew !"

They came, of course, at their master's call,
The witches, the broomsticks, the cats, and
all ;
He led the hags to a railway train
The horses were trying to drag in vain.
'Now, then," says he, "you've had your fun,
And here are the cars you've got to run.

The driver may just unhitch his team,
We don't want horses, we don't want steam;
You may keep your old black cats to hug,
But the loaded train you've got to lug."

Since then on many a car you'll see
A broomstick plain as plain can be;
On every stick there's a witch astride,—
The string you see to her leg is tied.
She will do a mischief if she can,
But the string is held by a careful man,
And whenever the evil-minded witch
Would cut some caper, he gives a twitch.
As for the hag, you can't see her,
But hark! you can hear her black cat's purr,
And now and then, as a car goes by,
You may catch a gleam from her wicked eye.

Often you've looked on a rushing train,
But just what moved it was not so plain.
It couldn't be those wires above,
For they could neither pull nor shove;
Where was the motor that made it go
You couldn't guess, *but now you know.*

Remember my rhymes when you ride again
On the rattling rail by the broomstick train!

TARTARUS.

WHILE in my simple gospel creed
That "God is Love" so plain I read,
Shall dreams of heathen birth affright
My pathway through the coming night?
Ah, Lord of life, though spectres pale
Fill with their threats the shadowy vale,
With Thee my faltering steps to aid,
How can I dare to be afraid?

Shall mouldering page or fading scroll
Outface the charter of the soul?
Shall priesthood's palsied arm protect
The wrong our human hearts reject,
And smite the lips whose shuddering cry
Proclaims a cruel creed a lie?
The wizard's rope we disallow
Was justice once,—is murder now!

Is there a world of blank despair,
And dwells the Omnipresent there?
Does He behold with smile serene
The shows of that unending scene,
Where sleepless, hopeless anguish lies,
And, ever dying, never dies?
Say, does He hear the sufferer's groan,
And is that child of wrath His own?

O mortal, wavering in thy trust,
Lift thy pale forehead from the dust !
The mists that cloud thy darkened eyes
Fade e'er they reach the o'erarching skies !
When the blind heralds of despair
Would bid thee doubt a Father's care,
Look up from earth, and read above
On heaven's blue tablet, GOD IS LOVE !

AT THE TURN OF THE ROAD.

THE glory has passed from the golden-
rod's plume,
The purple-hued asters still linger in bloom :
The birch is bright yellow, the sumachs are
red,
The maples like torches aflame overhead.

But what if the joy of the summer is past,
And winter's wild herald is blowing his
blast ?
For me dull November is sweeter than May,
For my love is its sunshine,—she meets me
to-day !

Will she come ? Will the ring-dove return
to her nest ?
Will the needle swing back from the east or
the west ?

At the stroke of the hour she will be at her
gate;

A friend may prove laggard,—love never
comes late.

Do I see her afar in the distance? Not yet.
Too early! Too early! She could not for-
get!

When I crossed the old bridge where the
brook overflowed,
She will flash full in sight at the turn of the
road.

I pass the low wall where the ivy entwines;
I tread the brown pathway that leads
through the pines;
I haste by the boulder that lies in the field,
Where her promise at parting was lovingly
sealed.

Will she come by the hillside or round
through the wood?

Will she wear her brown dress or her mantle
and hood?

The minute draws near,—but her watch
may go wrong;

My heart *will* be asking, What keeps her
so long?

Why doubt for a moment? More shame if
I do !

Why question? Why tremble? Are angels
more true ?

She would come to the lover who calls her
his own

Though she trod in the track of a whirling
cyclone !

I crossed the old bridge ere the minute had
passed.

I looked : lo ! my Love stood before me at
last.

Her eyes, how they sparkled, her cheeks,
how they glowed,

As we met, face to face, at the turn of the
road !

INVITÂ MINERVÂ.

VEX not the Muse with idle prayers,—
She will not hear thy call ;

She steals upon thee unawares,
Or seeks thee not at all.

Soft as the moonbeams when they sought
Endymion's fragrant bower,

She parts the whispering leaves of thought
To show her full-blown flower.

For thee her wooing hour has passed,
The singing birds have flown,
And winter comes with icy blast
To chill thy buds unblown.

Yet, though the woods no longer thrill
As once their arches rung,
Sweet echoes hover round thee still
Of songs thy summer sung.

Live in thy past ; await no more
The rush of heaven-sent wings ;
Earth still has music left in store
While Memory sighs and sings.

READINGS OVER THE TEACUPS.

FIVE STORIES AND A SEQUEL.

TO MY OLD READERS.

YOU know "The Teacups," that congenial set

Which round the Teapot you have often met ;

The grave DICTATOR, him you knew of old,—

Knew as the shepherd of another fold :

Grayer he looks, less youthful, but the same

As when you called him by a different name.

Near him the MISTRESS, whose experienced skill

Has taught her duly every cup to fill ;

"Weak ;" "strong ;" "cool ;" "lukewarm ;" "hot as you can pour ;"

"No sweetening ;" "sugared ;" "two lumps ;" "one lump more."

Next, the PROFESSOR, whose scholastic phrase

At every turn the teacher's tongue betrays,

Trying so hard to make his speech precise
The captious listener finds it overnice.

Nor be forgotten our ANNEXES twain,
Nor HE, the owner of the squinting brain,
Which, while its curious fancies we pursue,
Oft makes us question, "Are we crack-
brained too?"

Along the board our growing list extends,
As one by one we count our clustering
friends,—

The youthful DOCTOR waiting for his share
Of fits and fevers when his crown gets bare;
In strong, dark lines our square-nibbed pen
should draw

The lordly presence of the MAN OF LAW;
Our bashful TUTOR claims a humbler place,
A lighter touch, his slender form to trace.
Mark the fair lady he is seated by,—
Some say he is her lover,—some deny,—
Watch them together,—time alone can show
If dead-ripe friendship turns to love or no.
Where in my list of phrases shall I seek
The fitting words of NUMBER FIVE to speak?
Such task demands a readier pen than
mine,—

What if I steal the Tutor's Valentine?

*Why should I call her gracious, winning,
fair?*

Why with the loveliest of her sex compare?

Those varied charms have many a Muse inspired,—

*At last their worn superlatives have tired ;
Wit, beauty, sweetness, each alluring grace,
All these in honeyed verse have found their
place ;*

*I need them not,—two little words I find
Which hold them all in happiest form combined ;*

*No more with baffled language will I strive,—
All in one breath I utter : Number Five !*

Now count our teaspoons—if you care to
learn

How many tinkling cups were served in
turn,—

Add all together, you will find them ten,—
Our young MUSICIAN joined us now and then.
Our bright DELILAH you must needs recall,
The comely handmaid, youngest of us all ;
Need I remind you how the little maid
Came at a pinch to our Professor's aid,—
Trimmed his long locks with unrelenting
shears

And eased his looks of half a score of years ?

Sometimes, at table, as you well must know,
The stream of talk will all at once run low,
The air seems smitten with a sudden chill,
The wit grows silent and the gossip still ;

This was our poet's chance, the hour of need,
When rhymes and stories we were used to
read.

One day a whisper round the teacups
stole,—

“*No scrap of paper in the silver bowl!*”

(Our “poets’ corner” may I not expect
My kindly reader still may recollect?)

“What! not a line to keep our souls alive?”
Spoke in her silvery accents Number Five.

“No matter, something we must find to
read,—

Find it or make it,—yes, we must indeed!
Now I remember I have seen at times
Some curious stories in a book of rhymes,—
How certain secrets, long in silence sealed,
In after days were guessed at or revealed.
Those stories, doubtless, some of you must
know,—

They all were written many a year ago;
But an old story, be it false or true,
Twice told, well told, is twice as good as
new;

Wait but three sips and I will go myself,
And fetch the book of verses from its shelf.”

No time was lost in finding what she
sought,—

Gone but one moment,—lo! the book is
brought.

"Now, then, Professor, fortune has decreed
 That you, this evening, shall be first to read,—
 Lucky for us that listen, for in fact
 Who reads this poem must know how to *act*."
 Right well she knew that in his greener age
 He had a mighty hankering for the stage.
 The patient audience had not long to wait;
 Pleased with his chance, he smiled and took the bait;
 Through his wild hair his coaxing fingers ran,—
 He spread the page before him and began,

THE BANKER'S SECRET.

THE Banker's dinner is the stateliest feast
 The town has heard of for a year, at least;
 The sparry lustres shed their broadest blaze,
 Damask and silver catch and spread the rays;
 The florist's triumphs crown the daintier spoil
 Won from the sea, the forest, or the soil;

The steaming hot-house yields its largest
pines,
The sunless vaults unearth their oldest
wines ;
With one admiring look the scene survey,
And turn a moment from the bright display.

Of all the joys of earthly pride or power,
What gives most life, worth living, in an
hour ?
When Victory settles on the doubtful fight
And the last foeman wheels in panting
flight,
No thrill like this is felt beneath the sun ;
Life's sovereign moment is a battle won.

But say what next ? To shape a Senate's
choice,
By the strong magic of the master's voice ;
To ride the stormy tempest of debate
That whirls the wavering fortunes of the
state.

Third in the list, the happy lover's prize
Is won by honeyed words from women's eyes.
If some would have it first instead of third,
So let it be,—I answer not a word.

The fourth,—sweet reader, let the thought-
less half
Have its small shrug and inoffensive laugh ;

Let the grave quarter wear its virtuous
frown,
The stern half-quarter try to scowl us down ;
But the last eighth, the choice and sifted
few,
Will hear my words, and, pleased, confess
them true.

Among the great whom Heaven has made
to shine,
How few have learned the art of arts,—to
dine !
Nature, indulgent to our daily need,
Kind-hearted mother ! taught us all to feed ;
But the chief art,—how rarely Nature flings
This choicest gift among her social kings !
Say, man of truth, has life a brighter hour
Than waits the chosen guest who knows his
power ?

He moves with ease, itself an angel
charm,—
Lifts with light touch my lady's jewelled
arm,
Slides to his seat, half leading and half led,
Smiling but quiet till the grace is said,
Then gently kindles, while by slow degrees
Creep softly out the little arts that please ;
Bright looks, the cheerful language of the eye,
The neat, crisp question and the gay reply,—

Talk light and airy, such as well may pass
Between the rested fork and lifted glass ;—
With play like this the earlier evening flies,
Till rustling silks proclaim the ladies rise.

His hour has come,—he looks along the
chairs,

As the Great Duke surveyed his iron squares.
That's the young traveller,—isn't much to
show,—

Fast on the road, but at the table slow.

Next him,—you see the author in his look,—
His forehead lined with wrinkles like a
book,—

Wrote the great history of the ancient
Huns,—

Holds back to fire among the heavy guns.

Oh, there's our poet seated at his side,

Beloved of ladies, soft, cerulean-eyed.

Poets are prosy in their common talk,

As the fast trotters, for the most part, walk.

And there's our well-dressed gentleman, who
sits,

By right divine, no doubt, among the wits,

Who airs his tailor's patterns when he
walks,

The man that often speaks, but never talks.

Why should he talk, whose presence lends a
grace

To every table where he shows his face?

He knows the manual of the silver fork,
 Can name his claret—if he sees the cork,—
 Remark that “White-top” was considered
 fine,

But swear the “Juno” is the better wine;—
 Is not this talking? Ask Quintilian’s rules;
 If they say No, the town has many fools.
 Pause for a moment,—for our eyes behold
 The plain unsceptred king, the man of gold,
 The thrice illustrious threefold millionaire;
 Mark his slow-creeping, dead, metallic
 stare;

His eyes, dull glimmering, like the balance
 pan
 That weighs its guinea as he weighs his
 man.

Who’s next? An artist in a satin tie
 Whose ample folds defeat the curious eye.
 And there’s the cousin,—must be asked, you
 know,—

Looks like a spinster at a baby-show.
 Hope he is cool,—they set him next the
 door,—
 And likes his place, between the gap and
 bore.

Next comes a Congressman, distinguished
 guest!

We don’t count him,—they asked him with
 the rest;

And then some white cravats, with well-
shaped ties,
And heads above them which their owners
prize.

Of all that cluster round the genial board,
Not one so radiant as the banquet's lord.
Some say they fancy, but they know not
why,

A shade of trouble brooding in his eye,
Nothing, perhaps,—the rooms are overhot,—
Yet see his cheek,—the dull-red burning
spot,—

Taste the brown sherry which he does not
pass,—

Ha ! That is brandy ; see him fill his glass !

But not forgetful of his feasting friends,
To each in turn some lively word he sends ;
See how he throws his baited lines about,
And plays his men as anglers play their
trout.

With the dry sticks all bonfires are begun ;
Bring the first fagot, proser number one !
A question drops among the listening crew
And hits the traveller, pat on Timbuctoo.
We're on the Niger, somewhere near its
source,—

Not the least hurry, take the river's course

Through Kissi, Foota, Kankan, Bammakoo,
 Bambarra, Sego, so to Timbuctoo,
 Thence down to Youri ;—stop him if we can,
 We can't fare worse,—wake up the Congress-
 man !

The Congressman, once on his talking legs,
 Stirs up his knowledge to its thickest dregs ;
 Tremendous draught for dining men to
 quaff !

Nothing will choke him but a purpling
 laugh.

A word,—a shout,—a mighty roar,—'tis
 done ;

Extinguished ; lassoed by a treacherous pun.

A laugh is priming to the loaded soul ;
 The scattering shots become a steady roll,
 Broke by sharp cracks that run along the
 line,

The light artillery of the talker's wine.

The kindling goblets flame with golden
 dews,

The hoarded flasks their tawny fire diffuse,
 And the Rhine's breast-milk gushes cold
 and bright,

Pale as the moon and maddening as her
 light ;

With crimson juice the thirsty southern sky
 Sucks from the hills where buried armies
 lie,

So that the dreamy passion it imparts
Is drawn from heroes' bones and lovers'
hearts.

But lulls will come; the flashing soul
transmits

Its gleams of light in alternating fits.

The shower of talk that rattled down amain
Ends in small patterings like an April's
rain;

The voices halt; the game is at a stand;
Now for a solo from the master-hand!

'Tis but a story,—quite a simple thing,—
An *aria* touched upon a single string,
And every accent comes with such a grace
The stupid servants listen in their place,
Each with his waiter in his lifted hands,
Still as a well-bred pointer when he stands.
A query checks him: "Is he quite exact?"
(This from a grizzled, square-jawed man of
fact.)

The sparkling story leaves him to his fate,
Crushed by a witness, smothered with a
date,

As a swift river, sown with many a star,
Runs brighter, rippling on a shallow bar.
The smooth divine suggests a graver doubt;
A neat quotation bowls the parson out;
Then, sliding gayly from his own display,
He laughs the learned dullness all away.

So, with the merry tale and jovial song,
 The jocund evening whirls itself along,
 Till the last chorus shrieks its loud *encore*,
 And the white neckcloths vanish through
 the door.

One savage word !—The menials know its
 tone,
 And slink away ; the master stands alone.
 “Well played, by ——” ; breathe not what
 were best unheard ;
 His goblet shivers while he speaks the word,—
 “If wine tells truth,—and so have said the
 wise,—

It makes me laugh to think how brandy lies !
 Bankrupt to-morrow,—millionaire to-day,—
 The farce is over,—now begins the play !”

The spring he touches lets a panel glide ;
 An iron closet lurks beneath the slide,
 Bright with such treasures as a search might
 bring

From the deep pockets of a truant king.
 Two diamonds, eyeballs of a god of bronze,
 Bought from his faithful priest, a pious
 bonze ;

A string of brilliants ; rubies, three or four ;
 Bags of old coin and bars of virgin ore ;
 A jewelled poniard and a Turkish knife,
 Noiseless and useful if we come to strife.

Gone ! As a pirate flies before the wind,
And not one tear for all he leaves behind !
From all the love his better years have
known
Fled like a felon,—ah ! but not alone !
The chariot flashes through a lantern's
glare,—
Oh the wild eyes ! the storm of sable hair !
Still to his side the broken heart will cling,—
The bride of shame, the wife without the
ring :
Hark, the deep oath,—the wail of frenzied
woe,—
Lost ! lost to hope of Heaven and peace
below !

He kept his secret ; but the seed of crime
Bursts of itself in God's appointed time.
The lives he wrecked were scattered far and
wide ;
One never blamed nor wept,—she only died.
None knew his lot, though idle tongues
would say
He sought a lonely refuge far away,
And there, with borrowed name and altered
mien,
He died unheeded, as he lived unseen.
The moral market had the usual chills
Of Virtue suffering from protested bills :

The White Cravats, to friendship's memory
 true,
 Sighed for the past, surveyed the future too ;
 Their sorrow breathed in one expressive
 line,—
 "Gave pleasant dinners ; who has got his
 wine ?"

The reader paused,—the Teacups knew
 his ways,—
 He, like the rest, was not averse to praise.
 Voices and hands united ; every one
 Joined in approval : " Number Three, well
 done !"

" Now for the Exile's story ; if my wits
 Are not at fault, his curious record fits
 Neatly as sequel to the tale we've heard ;
 Not wholly wild the fancy, nor absurd
 That this our island hermit well might be
 That story's hero, fled from over sea.
 Come, Number Seven, we would not have
 you strain
 The fertile powers of that inventive brain.
 Read us 'The Exile's Secret' ; there's enough
 Of dream-like fiction and fantastic stuff
 In the strange web of mystery that invests
 The lonely isle where sea birds build their
 nests."

“Lies! naught but lies!” so Number
Seven began,—

No harm was known of that secluded man.
He lived alone,—who wouldn’t if he might,
And leave the rogues and idiots out of sight?
A foolish story,—still, I’ll do my best,—
The house was real,—don’t believe the rest.
How could a ruined dwelling last so long
Without its legends shaped in tale and song?
Who was this man of whom they tell the
lies?

Perhaps—why not?—NAPOLEON! in dis-
guise,—

So some said, kidnapped from his ocean
coop,

Brought to this island in a coasting sloop,—
Meanwhile a sham Napoleon in his place
Played Nap. and saved Sir Hudson from
disgrace.

Such was one story; others used to say,

“No,—not Napoleon,—it was Marshal
Ney.”

“*Shot?*” Yes, no doubt, but not with balls
of lead,

But balls of pith that never shoot folks dead.
He wandered round, lived South for many
a year,

At last came North and fixed his dwelling
here.

Choose which you will of all the tales that
 pile
 Their mingling fables on the tree-crowned
 isle.

Who wrote this modest version I suppose
 That truthful Teacup, our Dictator, knows ;
 Made up of various legends, it would seem,
 The sailor's yarn, the crazy poet's dream.
 Such tales as this, by simple souls received,
 At first are stared at and at last believed ;
 From threads like this the grave historians
 try
 To weave their webs, and never know they
 lie.
 Hear, then, the fables that have gathered
 round
 The lonely home an exiled stranger found.

THE EXILE'S SECRET.

YE that have faced the billows and the
 spray
 Of good St. Botolph's island-studded bay,
 As from the gliding bark your eye has
 scanned
 The beaconed rocks, the wave-girt hills of
 sand,

Have ye not marked one elm-o'ershadowed
isle,

Round as the dimple chased in beauty's
smile,—

A stain of verdure on an azure field,
Set like a jewel in a battered shield?

Fixed in the narrow gorge of Ocean's path,
Peaceful it meets him in his hour of wrath;
When the mailed Titan, scourged by hiss-
ing gales,

Writhes in his glistening coat of clashing
scales,

The storm-beat island spreads its tranquil
green,

Calm as an emerald on an angry queen.

So fair when distant should be fairer near;
A boat shall waft us from the outstretched
pier,

The breeze blows fresh; we reach the
island's edge,

Our shallop rustling through the yielding
sedge.

No welcome greets us on the desert isle;
Those elms, far-shadowing, hide no stately
pile:

Yet these green ridges mark an ancient road;
And lo! the traces of a fair abode;
The long gray line that marks a garden-wall,
And heaps of fallen beams,—fire-branded all.

Who sees unmoved, a ruin at his feet,
 The lowliest home where human hearts have
 beat?
 Its hearthstone, shaded with the bistre
 stain
 A century's showery torrents wash in vain;
 Its starving orchard, where the thistle blows
 And mossy trunks still mark the broken
 rows;
 Its chimney-loving poplar, oftenest seen
 Next an old roof, or where a roof has been;
 Its knot-grass, plaintain,—all the social
 weeds,
 Man's mute companions, following where
 he leads;
 Its dwarfed, pale flowers, that show their
 straggling heads,
 Sown by the wind from grass-choked garden-
 beds;
 Its woodbine, creeping where it used to
 climb;
 Its roses, breathing of the olden time;
 All the poor shows the curious idler sees,
 As life's thin shadows waste by slow de-
 grees,
 Till naught remains, the saddening tale to
 tell,
 Save home's last wrecks,—the cellar and the
 well?

And whose the home that strews in black
decay

The one green-glowing island of the bay?
Some dark-browed pirate's, jealous of the
fate

That seized the strangled wretch of "Nix's
Mate"?

Some forger's, skulking in a borrowed name,
Whom Tyburn's dangling halter yet may
claim?

Some wan-eyed exile's, wealth and sorrow's
heir,

Who sought a lone retreat for tears and
prayer?

Some brooding poet's, sure of deathless fame,
Had not his epic perished in the flame?

Or some gray wooer's, whom a girlish frown
Chased from his solid friends and sober
town?

Or some plain tradesman's, fond of shade
and ease,

Who sought them both beneath these quiet
trees?

Why question mutes no question can unlock,
Dumb as the legend on the Dighton rock?

One thing at least these ruined heaps de-
clare,—

They were a shelter once; a man lived
there.

But where the charred and crumbling re-
 cords fail,
 Some breathing lips may piece the half-told
 tale ;
 No man may live with neighbours such as
 these,
 Though girt with walls of rock and angry
 seas,
 And shield his home, his children, or his
 wife,
 His ways, his means, his vote, his creed, his
 life,
 From the dread sovereignty of Ears and
 Eyes
 And the small member that beneath them
 lies.
 They told strange things of that mysteri-
 ous man ;
 Believe who will, deny them such as can ;
 Why should we fret if every passing sail
 Had its old seaman talking on the rail ?
 The deep-sunk schooner stuffed with Eastern
 lime,
 Slow wedging on, as if the waves were
 slime ;
 The knife-edged clipper with her ruffled
 spars,
 The pawing steamer with her mane of
 stars,

The bull-browed galliot butting through the
stream,
The wide-sailed yacht that slipped along
her beam,
The deck-piled sloops, the pinched chebacco-
boats,
The frigate, black with thunder-freighted
throats,
All had their talk about the lonely man ;
And thus, in varying phrase, the story ran.
His name had cost him little care to seek,
Plain, honest, brief, a decent name to
speak,
Common, not vulgar, just the kind that
slips
With least suggestion from a stranger's lips.
His birthplace England, as his speech might
show,
Or his hale cheek, that wore the red-streak's
glow ;
His mouth sharp-moulded ; in its mirth or
scorn
There came a flash as from the milky corn,
When from the ear you rip the rustling
sheath,
And the white ridges show their even teeth.
His stature moderate, but his strength con-
fessed,
In spite of broadcloth, by his ample breast ;

Full-armed, thick-handed ; one that had
 been strong,
 And might be dangerous still, if things
 went wrong.
 He lived at ease beneath his elm-trees' shade,
 Did naught for gain, yet all his debts were
 paid ;
 Rich, so 'twas thought, but careful of his
 store ;
 Had all he needed, claimed to have no more.

But some that lingered round the isle
 at night
 Spoke of strange stealthy doings in their
 sight ;
 Of creeping lonely visits that he made
 To nooks and corners, with a torch and
 spade.
 Some said they saw the hollow of a cave ;
 One, given to fables, swore it was a grave ;
 Whereat some shuddered, others boldly cried,
 Those prowling boatmen lied, and knew
 they lied.

They said his house was framed with
 curious cares,
 Lest some old friend might enter unawares ;
 That on the platform at his chamber's door
 Hinged a loose square that opened through
 the floor ;

Touch the black silken tassel next the bell,
Down, with a crash, the flapping trap-door
fell ;

Three stories deep the falling wretch would
strike,

To writhe at leisure on a boarder's pike,
By day armed always ; double-armed at
night,

His tools lay round him ; wake him such as
might.

A carbine hung beside his India fan,
His hand could reach a Turkish ataghan ;
Pistols, with quaint-carved stocks and
barrels gilt,

Crossed a long dagger with a jewelled hilt ;
A slashing cutlass stretched along the bed ;—
All this was what those lying boatmen said.

Then some were full of wondrous stories
told

Of great oak chests and cupboards full of
gold ;

Of the wedged ingots and the silver bars
That cost old pirates ugly sabre-scars ;
How his laced wallet often would disgorge
The fresh-faced guinea of an English George,
Or sweated ducat, palmed by Jews of yore,
Or double Joe, or Portuguese moidore ;
And how his finger wore a rubied ring
Fit for the white-necked play-girl of a king.

But these fine legends, told with staring
 eyes,
 Met with small credence from the old and
 wise.

Why tell each idle guess, each whisper
 vain?
 Enough: the scorched and cindered beams
 remain.
 He came, a silent pilgrim to the West,
 Some old-world mystery throbbing in his
 breast;
 Close to the thronging mart he dwelt alone;
 He lived; he died. The rest is all unknown.

Stranger, whose eyes the shadowy isle
 survey,
 As the black steamer dashes through the
 bay,
 Why ask his buried secret to divine?
 He was thy brother; speak, and tell us
 thine!

Silence at first, a kind of spell-bound
 pause;
 Then all the Teacups tinkled their applause;
 When that was hushed no sound the still-
 ness broke
 Till once again the soft-voiced lady spoke:

“The Lover’s Secret,—surely that must
need

The youngest voice our table holds to read.
Which of our two ‘Annexes’ shall we
choose?

Either were charming, neither will refuse;
But choose we must,—what better can we
do

Than take the younger of the youthful two?”

True to the primal instinct of her sex,

“Why, that means *me*,” half whispered
each Annex.

“What if it does?” the voiceless question
came,

That set those pale New England cheeks
afame;

“Our old-world scholar may have ways to
teach,—

Of Oxford English, Britain’s purest speech,—
She shall be youngest,—youngest *for to-
day*,—

Our dates we’ll fix hereafter as we may;
All rights reserved,—the words we know so
well,

That guard the claims of books which never
sell.”

The British maiden bowed a pleased
assent,

Her two long ringlets swinging as she bent;

The glistening eyes her eager soul looked
 through
 Betrayed her lineage in their Saxon blue.
 Backward she flung each too obtrusive curl,
 And thus began,—the rose-lipped English
 girl.

THE LOVER'S SECRET.

WHAT ailed young Lucius? Art had
 vainly tried
 To guess his ill, and found herself defied.
 The Augur plied his legendary skill ;
 Useless ; the fair young Roman languished
 still.
 His chariot took him every cloudless day
 Along the Pincian Hill or Appian Way ;
 They rubbed his wasted limbs with sulphur-
 ous oil,
 Oozed from the far-off Orient's heated soil ;
 They led him tottering down the steamy
 path
 Where bubbling fountains filled the thermal
 bath ;
 Borne in his litter to Egeria's cave,
 They washed him, shivering, in her icy
 wave.

They sought all curious herbs and costly
stones,
They scraped the moss that grew on dead
men's bones,
They tried all cures the votive tablets
taught,
Scoured every place whence healing drugs
were brought,
O'er Thracian hills his breathless couriers
ran,
His slaves waylaid the Syrian caravan.

At last a servant heard a stranger speak
A new chirurgeon's name ; a clever Greek,
Skilled in his art ; from Pergamus he came
To Rome but lately ; GALEN was the
name.

The Greek was called : a man with piercing
eyes,
Who must be cunning, and who might be
wise.

He spoke but little,—if they pleased, he
said,

He'd wait awhile beside the sufferer's bed.
So by his side he sat, serene and calm,
His very accents soft as healing balm ;
Not curious seemed, but every movement
spied,

His sharp eyes searching where they seemed
to glide ;

Asked a few questions,—what he felt, and where?

“A pain just here,” “A constant beating there.”

Who ordered bathing for his aches and ails?

“Charmis, the water-doctor from Marseilles.”

What was the last prescription in his case?

“A draught of wine with powdered chryso-prase.”

Had he no secret grief he nursed alone?

A pause; a little tremor; answer,—
“None.”

Thoughtful, a moment, sat the cunning
lecch,

And muttered “Eros!” in his native speech.

In the broad atrium various friends await
The last new utterance from the lips of
fate;

Men, matrons, maids, they talk the question
o’er,

And, restless, pace the tessellated floor.

Not unobserved the youth so long had pined
By gentle-hearted dames and damsels kind;
One with the rest, a rich Patrician’s pride,
The lady Hermia, called “the golden-eyed”;
The same the old Proconsul fain must woo,
Whom, one dark night, a masked sicarius
slew;

The same black Crassus over roughly pressed
To hear his suit,—the Tiber knows the rest.
(Crassus was missed next morning by his
set ;

Next week the fishers found him in their
net.)

She with the others paced the ample hall,
Fairest, alas ! and saddest of them all.

At length the Greek declared, with puzzled
face,

Some strange enchantment mingled in the
case,

And naught would serve to act as counter-
charm

Save a warm bracelet from a maiden's arm.
Not every maiden's,—many might be tried ;
Which not in vain, experience must de-
cide.

Were there no damsels willing to attend
And do such service for a suffering friend ?

The message passed among the waiting
crowd,

First in a whisper, then proclaimed aloud.
Some wore no jewels ; some were disinclined,
For reasons better guessed at than defined ;
Though all were saints,—at least professed
to be,—

The list all counted, there were named but
three.

The leech, still seated by the patient's
side,
Held his thin wrist, and watched him,
eagle-eyed.

Aurelia first, a fair-haired Tuscan girl,
Slipped off her golden asp, with eyes of
pearl.

His solemn head the grave physician shook;
The waxen features thanked her with a
look.

Olympia next, a creature half divine,
Sprung from the blood of old Evander's line,
Held her white arm, that wore a twisted
chain

Clasped with an opal-sheeny cymophane.
In vain, O daughter! said the baffled
Greek.

The patient sighed the thanks he could not
speak.

Last, Hermia entered; look, that sudden
start!

The pallium heaves above his leaping heart;
The beating pulse, the cheek's rekindled
flame,

Those quivering lips, the secret all proclaim,
The deep disease long throbbing in the
breast,

The dread enchantment, all at once con-
fessed!

The case was plain ; the treatment was begun ;

And Love soon cured the mischief he had done.

Young Love, too oft thy treacherous bandage slips

Down from the eyes it blinded to the lips !

Ask not the Gods, O youth, for clearer sight,

But the bold heart to plead thy cause aright.

And thou, fair maiden, when thy lovers sigh,

Suspect thy flattering ear, but trust thine eye ;

And learn this secret from the tale of old :

No love so true as love that dies untold.

“Bravo, Annex !” they shouted, every one,—

“Not Mrs. Kemble’s self had better done.”

“Quite so,” she stammered in her awkward way,—

Not just the thing, but something she must say.

The teaspoon chorus tinkled to its close
When from his chair the MAN OF LAW arose,

Called by her voice whose mandate all
 obeyed,
 And took the open volume she displayed.
 Tall, stately, strong, his form begins to
 own
 Some slight exuberance in its central zone,—
 That comely fulness of the growing girth
 Which fifty summers lend the sons of earth.
 A smooth, round disk about whose margin
 stray,
 Above the temples, glistening threads of
 gray;
 Strong, deep-cut grooves by toilsome de-
 cades wrought
 On brow and mouth, the battle-fields of
 thought;
 A voice that lingers in the listener's ear,
 Grave, calm, far-reaching, every accent
 clear,—
 (Those tones resistless many a foreman
 knew
 That shaped their verdict ere the twelve
 withdrew;)

A statesman's forehead, athlete's throat and
 jaw,
 Such the proud semblance of the Man of
 Law.
 His eye just lighted on the printed leaf,
 Held as a practised pleader holds his brief.

One whispered softly from behind his cup,
"He does not read,—his book is wrong side
up !

He knows the story that it holds by heart,—
So like his own ! How well he 'll act his
part ! "

Then all were silent ; not a rustling fan
Stirred the deep stillness as the voice began.

THE STATESMAN'S SECRET.

WHO of all statesmen is his country's
pride,
Her councils' prompter and her leaders'
guide ?
He speaks ; the nation holds its breath to
hear ;
He nods, and shakes the sunset hemisphere.
Born where the primal fount of Nature
springs
By the rude cradles of her throneless kings,
In his proud eye her royal signet flames,
By his own lips her Monarch she proclaims.
Why name his countless triumphs, whom
to meet
Is to be famous, envied in defeat ?
The keen debaters, trained to brawls and
strife,
Who fire one shot, and finish with the knife,

Tried him but once, and, cowering in their
shame,

Ground their hacked blades to strike at
meaner game.

The lordly chief, his party's central stay,
Whose lightest word a hundred votes obey,
Found a new listener seated at his side,
Looked in his eye, and felt himself defied,
Flung his rash gauntlet on the startled
floor,

Met the all-conquering, fought,—and ruled
no more.

See where he moves, what eager crowds
attend !

What shouts of thronging multitudes ascend !
If this is life,—to mark with every hour
The purple deepening in his robes of power,
To see the painted fruits of honour fall
Thick at his feet, and choose among them
all,

To hear the sounds that shape his spreading
name

Peal through the myriad organ-stops of
fame,

Stamp the lone isle that spots the seaman's
chart,

And crown the pillared glory of the mart,
To count as peers the few supremely wise
Who mark their planet in the angels' eyes,—

If this is life—

What savage man is he
Who strides alone beside the sounding sea?
Alone he wanders by the murmuring shore,
His thoughts as restless as the waves that
 roar ;

Looks on the sullen sky as stormy-browed
As on the waves yon tempest-brooding
 cloud,

Heaves from his aching breast a wailing sigh,
Sad as the gust that sweeps the clouded sky.
Ask him his griefs ; what midnight demons
 plough

The lines of torture on his lofty brow ;
Unlock those marble lips, and bid them
 speak

The mystery freezing in his bloodless cheek.

His secret? Hid beneath a flimsy word ;
One foolish whisper that ambition heard ;
And thus it spake : “Behold yon gilded
 chair,

The world's one vacant throne,—thy place
 is there !”

Ah, fatal dream ! What warning spectres
 meet

In ghastly circle round its shadowy seat !
Yet still the Tempter murmurs in his ear
The maddening taunt he cannot choose but
 hear :

"Meanest of slaves, by gods and men
 accurst,
 He who is second when he might be first !
 Climb with bold front the ladder's topmost
 round,
 Or chain thy creeping footsteps to the
 ground ! "

Illustrious Dupe ! Have those majestic eyes
 Lost their proud fire for such a vulgar prize ?
 Art thou the last of all mankind to know
 That party-fights are won by aiming low ?
 Thou, stamped by Nature with her royal
 sign,
 That party-hirelings hate a look like thine ?
 Shake from thy sense the wild delusive
 dream !
 Without the purple, art thou not supreme ?
 And soothed by love unbought, thy heart
 shall own
 A nation's homage nobler than its throne !

Loud rang the plaudits ; with them rose
 the thought,
 "Would he had learned the lesson he has
 taught ! "
 Used to the tributes of the noisy crowd,
 The stately speaker calmly smiled and
 bowed ;

The fire within a flushing cheek betrayed,
And eyes that burned beneath their pent-
house shade.

“The clock strikes ten, the hours are flying
fast,—
Now, Number Five, we’ve kept you till
the last !”

What music charms like those caressing
tones
Whose magic influence every listener owns,—
Where all the woman finds herself expressed,
And Heaven’s divinest effluence breathes
confessed ?
Such was the breath that wooed our ravished
ears,
Sweet as the voice a dreaming vestal hears ;
Soft as the murmur of a brooding dove,
It told the mystery of a mother’s love.

THE MOTHER’S SECRET.

HOW sweet the sacred legend—if un-
blamed .

In my slight verse such holy things are
named—
Of Mary’s secret hours of hidden joy,
Silent, but pondering on her wondrous boy !

Ave, Maria ! Pardon, if I wrong
 Those heavenly words that shame my
 earthly song !

The choral host had closed the Angel's
 strain
 Sung to the listening watch on Bethlehem's
 plain,
 And now the shepherds, hastening on their
 way,
 Sought the still hamlet where the Infant
 lay.

They passed the fields that gleaning Ruth
 toiled o'er,—

They saw afar the ruined threshing-floor
 Where Moab's daughter, homeless and for-
 lorn,

Found Boaz slumbering by his heaps of
 corn ;

And some remembered how the holy scribe,
 Skilled in the lore of every jealous tribe,
 Traced the warm blood of Jesse's royal son
 To that fair alien, bravely wooed and won.
 So fared they on to seek the promised sign,
 That marked the anointed heir of David's
 line.

At last, by forms of earthly semblance
 led,
 They found the crowded inn, the oxen's
 shed.

No pomp was there, no glory shone around
On the coarse straw that strewed the reeking ground ;

One dim retreat a flickering torch betrayed,—

In that poor cell the Lord of Life was laid !
The wondering shepherds told their breathless tale

Of the bright choir that woke the sleeping vale ;

Told how the skies with sudden glory flamed,

Told how the shining multitude proclaimed,
“Joy, joy to earth ! Behold the hallowed morn !

In David's city Christ the Lord is born !
‘Glory to God !’ let angels shout on high,
‘Good-will to men !’ the listening earth reply !”

They spoke with hurried words and accents wild ;

Calm in his cradle slept the heavenly child.
No trembling word the mother's joy revealed,—

One sigh of rapture, and her lips were sealed ;

Unmoved she saw the rustic train depart,
But kept their words to ponder in her heart.

Twelve years had passed; the boy was
fair and tall,

Growing in wisdom, finding grace with all.
The maids of Nazareth, as they trooped to fill
Their balanced urns beside the mountain rill,
The gathered matrons, as they sat and spun,
Spoke in soft words of Joseph's quiet son.
No voice had reached the Galilean vale
Of star-led kings, or awe-struck shepherd's
tale;

In the meek, studious child they only saw
The future Rabbi, learned in Israel's law.
Beyond the hills that girt the village green;
Save when at midnight, o'er the starlit
sands,

Snatched from the steel of Herod's murder-
ing bands,

A babe, close folded to his mother's breast,
Through Edom's wilds he sought the shelter-
ing West.

Then Joseph spake: "Thy boy hath
largely grown;

Weave him fine raiment, fitting to be
shown;

Fair robes beseem the pilgrim, as the priest;
Goes he not with us to the holy feast?"

And Mary culled the flaxen fibres white;
Till eve she spun; she spun till morning
light.

The thread was twined ; its parting meshes
through

From hand to hand her restless shuttle flew,
Till the full web was wound upon the beam ;
Love's curious toil,—a vest without a seam !

They reach the Holy Place, fulfil the
days

To solemn feasting given, and grateful
praise.

At last they turn, and far Moriah's height
Melts in the southern sky and fades from
sight.

All day the dusky caravan has flowed
In devious trails along the winding road ;
(For many a step their homeward path
attends,

And all the sons of Abraham are as friends.)
Evening has come,—the hour of rest and
joy,—

Hush ! Hush ! That whisper,—“ Where is
Mary's boy ? ”

Oh, weary hour ! Oh, aching days that
passed
Filled with strange fears each wilder than
the last,—

The soldier's lance, the fierce centurion's
sword,

The crushing wheels that whirl some Roman
lord,

The midnight crypt that sucks the captive's
breath,

The blistering sun on Hinnom's vale of
death !

Thrice on his cheek had rained the morn-
ing light ;

Thrice on his lips the mildewed kiss of
night,

Crouched by a sheltering column's shining
plinth,

Or stretched beneath the odorous terebinth.

At last, in desperate mood, they sought
once more

The Temple's porches, searched in vain
before ;

They found him seated with the ancient
men,—

The grim old rufflers of the tongue and
pen,—

Their bald heads glistening as they clustered
near,

Their gray beards slanting as they turned to
hear,

Lost in half-envious wonder and surprise

That lips so fresh should utter words so wise.

And Mary said,—as one who, tried too
long,

Tells all her grief and half her sense of
wrong,—

“What is this thoughtless thing which thou hast done?

Lo, we have sought thee sorrowing, O my son!”

Few words he spake, and scarce of filial tone,

Strange words, their sense a mystery yet unknown;

Then turned with them and left the holy hill,

To all their mild commands obedient still.

The tale was told to Nazareth's sober men,

And Nazareth's matrons told it oft again;

The maids retold it at the fountain's side,

The youthful shepherds doubted or denied;

It passed around among the listening friends,

With all that fancy adds and fiction lends,

Till newer marvels dimmed the young renown

Of Joseph's son, who talked the Rabbis down.

But Mary, faithful to its lightest word,

Kept in her heart the sayings she had heard,

Till the dread morning rent the Temple's veil,

And shuddering earth confirmed the wondrous tale.

Youth fades ; love droops ; the leaves of
friendship fall :

A mother's secret hope outlives them all.

Hushed was the voice, but still its accents
thrilled

The throbbing hearts its lingering sweetness
filled.

The simple story which a tear repays
Asks not to share the noisy breath of praise.

A trance-like stillness,—scarce a whisper
heard,

No tinkling teaspoon in its saucer stirred ;
A deep-drawn sigh that would not be sup-
pressed,

A sob, a lifted kerchief told the rest.

“Come now, Dictator,” so the lady spoke,

“You too must fit your shoulder to the
yoke ;

You'll find there's something, doubtless, if
you look,

To serve your purpose,—so, now take the
book.”

“Ah, my dear lady, you must know full
well,

‘Story, God bless you, I have none to tell.’

To those five stories which these pages hold
 You all have listened,—every one is told.
 There's nothing left to make you smile or
 weep,—
 A few grave thoughts may work you off to
 sleep."

THE SECRET OF THE STARS.

IS man's the only throbbing heart that
 hides
 The silent spring that feeds its whispering
 tides?
 Speak from thy caverns, mystery-breeding
 Earth,
 Tell the half-hinted story of thy birth,
 And calm the noisy champions who have
 thrown
 The book of types against the book of stone !

Have ye not secrets, ye refulgent spheres,
 No sleepless listener of the starlight hears?
 In vain the sweeping equatorial pries
 Through every world-sown corner of the
 skies,
 To the far orb that so remotely strays
 Our midnight darkness is its noonday blaze ;

In vain the climbing soul of creeping man
 Metes out the heavenly concave with a span,
 Tracks into space the long-lost meteor's
 trail,
 And weighs an unseen planet in the scale;
 Still o'er their doubts the wan-eyed watchers
 sigh,
 And Science lifts her still unanswered cry:
 "Are all these worlds, that speed their
 circling flight,
 Dumb, vacant, soulless,—baubles of the
 night?
 Warmed with God's smile and wafted by
 his breath,
 To weave in ceaseless round the dance of
 Death?
 Or rolls a sphere in each expanding zone,
 Crowned with a life as varied as our own?"

Maker of earth and stars! If Thou hast
 taught
 By what Thy voice hath spoke, Thy hand
 hath wrought,
 By all that Science proves, or guesses true,
 More than Thy poet dreamed, Thy prophet
 knew,—
 The heavens still bow in darkness at Thy
 feet,
 And shadows veil Thy cloud-pavilioned seat!

Not for ourselves we ask Thee to reveal
One awful word beneath the future's seal ;
What Thou shalt tell us, grant us strength
to bear ;

What Thou withholdest is Thy single care.
Not for ourselves ; the present clings too fast,
Moored to the mighty anchors of the past ;
But when, with angry snap, some cable parts,
The sound re-echoing in our startled
hearts,—

When, through the wall that clasps the
harbour round,

And shuts the raving ocean from its bound,
Shattered and rent by sacrilegious hands,
The first mad billow leaps upon the sands,—
Then to the Future's awful page we turn,
And what we question hardly dare to learn.

Still let us hope ! for while we seem to
tread

The time-worn pathway of the nations dead,
Though Sparta laughs at all our warlike
deeds,

And buried Athens claims our stolen creeds,
Though Rome, a spectre on her broken
throne,

Beholds our eagle and recalls her own,
Though England fling her pennons on the
breeze

And reign before us Mistress of the seas,—

While calm-eyed History tracks us circling
round

Fate's iron pillar where they all were bound,
Still in our path a larger curve she finds,
The spiral widening as the chain unwinds !
Still sees new beacons crowned with brighter
flame

Than the old watch-fires, like, but not the
same !

No shameless haste shall spot with bandit-
crime

Our destined empire snatched before its
time.

Wait,—wait, undoubting, for the winds
have caught

From our bold speech the heritage of
thought ;

No marble form that sculptured truth can
wear

Vies with the image shaped in viewless air ;
And thought unfettered grows through
speech to deeds,

As the broad forest marches in its seeds.

What though we perish ere the day is won ?

Enough to see its glorious work begun !

The thistle falls before a trampling clown,

But who can chain the flying thistle-down ?

Wait while the fiery seeds of freedom fly,

The prairie blazes when the grass is dry !

What arms might ravish, leave to peaceful
arts,
Wisdom and love shall win the roughest
hearts ;
So shall the angel who has closed for man
The blissful garden since his woes began
Swing wide the golden portals of the West,
And Eden's secret stand at length confessed !

The reader paused ; in truth he thought it
time,—

Some threatening signs accused the drowsy
rhyme.

The Mistress nodded, the Professor dozed,
The two Annexes sat with eyelids closed,—
Not *sleeping*,—no ! But when one shuts one's
eyes,

That one hears better no one, sure, denies.
The Doctor whispered in Delilah's ear,
Or seemed to whisper, for their heads drew
near.

Not all the owner's efforts could restrain
The wild vagaries of the squinting brain,—
Last of the listeners Number Five alone
The patient reader still could call his own.

“Teacups, arouse !” 'Twas thus the spell
I broke ;

The drowsy started and the slumberers woke.

“The sleep I promised you have now enjoyed,

Due to your hour of labour well employed.
Swiftly the busy moments have been passed ;
This, our first “Teacups,” must not be our
last.

Here, on this spot, now consecrated ground,
The Order of “The Teacups” let us found !
By winter’s fireside and in summer’s bower
Still shall it claim its ever-welcome hour,
In distant regions where our feet may roam
The magic teapot find or make a home ;
Long may its floods their bright infusion
pour,

Till time and teacups both shall be no
more !”

VERSES FROM THE OLDEST PORTFOLIO.

FROM *THE COLLEGIAN*, 1830,
ILLUSTRATED ANNUALS, ETC.

Nescit vox missa reverti.—HORAT. *Ars Poetica*.

Ab iis quæ non adjuvant quam mollissime oportet pedem
referre.—QUINTILIAN, L. VI. C. 4.

These verses have always been printed in my collected poems, and as the best of them may bear a single reading, I allow them to appear, but in a less conspicuous position than the other productions. A chick, before his shell is off his back, is hardly a fair subject for severe criticism. If one has written anything worth preserving, his first efforts may be objects of interest and curiosity. Other young authors may take encouragement from seeing how tame, how feeble, how commonplace were the rudimentary attempts of the half-fledged poet. If the boy or youth had anything in him, there will probably be some sign of it in the midst of his imitative mediocrities and ambitious failures.

These "first verses" of mine, written before I was sixteen, have little beyond a common academy boy's ordinary performance. Yet a kindly critic said there was one line which showed a poetical quality:—

"The boiling ocean trembled into calm."

One of these poems—the reader may guess which—won fair words from Thackeray. The *Spectre Pig* was a wicked suggestion which came into my head after reading Dana's *Buccaneer*. Nobody seemed to find it out, and I never mentioned it to the venerable poet, who might not have been pleased with the parody.

This is enough to say of these unvalued copies of verses.

FIRST VERSES.

PHILLIPS ACADEMY, ANDOVER, MASS., 1824
OR 1825.

TRANSLATION FROM THE *ÆNEID*, BOOK I.

THE god looked out upon the troubled
deep

Waked into tumult from its placid sleep ;
The flame of anger kindles in his eye
As the wild waves ascend the lowering sky ;
He lifts his head above their awful height
And to the distant fleet directs his sight,
Now borne aloft upon the billow's crest,
Struck by the bolt or by the winds oppressed,
And well he knew that Juno's vengeful ire
Frowned from those clouds and sparkled in
that fire.

On rapid pinions as they whistled by
He calls swift Zephyrus and Eurus nigh :

Is this your glory in a noble line
To leave your confines and to ravage mine?
Whom I—but let these troubled waves
subside—

Another tempest and I'll quell your pride!
Go—bear our message to your master's ear,
That wide as ocean I am despot here;
Let him sit monarch in his barren caves,
I wield the trident and control the waves!

He said, and as the gathered vapours break
The swelling ocean seemed a peaceful lake;
To lift their ships the graceful nymphs
essayed

And the strong trident lent its powerful aid;
The dangerous banks are sunk beneath the
main,

And the light chariot skims the unruffled
plain.

As when sedition fires the public mind,
And maddening fury leads the rabble blind,
The blazing torch lights up the dread alarm,
Rage points the steel and fury nerves the
arm,

Then, if some reverend sage appear in sight,
They stand—they gaze, and check their
headlong flight,—

He turns the current of each wandering
breast

And hushes every passion into rest,—

Thus by the power of his imperial arm
The boiling ocean trembled into calm ;
With flowing reins the father sped his way
And smiled serene upon rekindled day.

THE MEETING OF THE DRYADS.

Written after a general pruning of the trees around Harvard College. A little poem, on a similar occasion, may be found in the works of Swift, from which, perhaps, the idea was borrowed ; although I was as much surprised as amused to meet with it some time after writing the following lines.

IT was not many centuries since,
When, gathered on the moonlit green,
Beneath the Tree of Liberty,
A ring of weeping sprites was seen.

The freshman's lamp had long been dim,
The voice of busy day was mute,
And tortured Melody had ceased
Her sufferings on the evening flute.

They met not as they once had met,
To laugh o'er many a jocund tale :
But every pulse was beating low,
And every cheek was cold and pale.

There rose a fair but faded one,
 Who oft had cheered them with her song;
 She waved a mutilated arm,
 And silence held the listening throng.

“Sweet friends,” the gentle nymph began,
 “From opening bud to withering leaf,
 One common lot has bound us all,
 In every change of joy and grief.

“While all around has felt decay,
 We rose in ever-living prime,
 With broader shade and fresher green,
 Beneath the crumbling step of Time.

“When often by our feet has past
 Some biped, Nature’s walking whim,
 Say, have we trimmed one awkward shape,
 Or lopped away one crooked limb?

“Go on, fair Science ; soon to thee
 Shall Nature yield her idle boast ;
 Her vulgar fingers formed a tree,
 But thou hast trained it to a post.

“Go, paint the birch’s silver rind,
 And quilt the peach with softer down ;
 Up with the willow’s trailing threads,
 Off with the sunflower’s radiant crown !

“Go, plant the lily on the shore,
 And set the rose among the waves,
 And bid the tropic bud unbind
 Its silken zone in arctic caves ;

“Bring bellows for the panting winds,
 Hang up a lantern by the moon
 And give the nightingale a fife,
 And lend the eagle a balloon !

“I cannot smile,—the tide of scorn,
 That rolled through every bleeding vein,
 Comes kindling fiercer as it flows
 Back to its burning source again.

“Again in every quivering leaf
 That moment's agony I feel,
 When limbs, that spurned the northern
 blast,
 Shrank from the sacrilegious steel.

“A curse upon the wretch who dared
 To crop us with his felon saw !
 May every fruit his lip shall taste
 Lie like a bullet in his maw.

“In every julep that he drinks,
 May gout, and bile, and headache be ;
 And when he strives to calm his pain,
 May colic mingle with his tea.

“ May nightshade cluster round his path,
And thistles shoot, and brambles cling ;
May blistering ivy scorch his veins,
And dogwood burn, and nettles sting.

“ On him may never shadow fall,
When fever racks his throbbing brow,
And his last shilling buy a rope
To hang him on my highest bough !”

She spoke ;—the morning’s herald beam
Sprang from the bosom of the sea,
And every mangled sprite returned
In sadness to her wounded tree.

THE MYSTERIOUS VISITOR.

THERE was a sound of hurrying feet
A tramp on echoing stairs,
There was a rush along the aisles,—
It was the hour of prayers.

And on, like Ocean’s midnight wave,
The current rolled along,
When, suddenly, a stranger form
Was seen amidst the throng.

He was a dark and swarthy man,
That uninvited guest ;
A faded coat of bottle-green
Was buttoned round his breast.

There was not one among them all
Could say from whence he came ;
Nor beardless boy, nor ancient man,
Could tell that stranger's name.

All silent as the sheeted dead,
In spite of sneer and frown,
Fast by a gray-haired senior's side
He sat him boldly down.

There was a look of horror flashed
From out the tutor's eyes ;
When all around him rose to pray,
The stranger did not rise !

A murmur broke along the crowd,
The prayer was at an end ;
With ringing heels and measured tread,
A hundred forms descend.

Through sounding aisle, o'er grating stair,
The long procession poured,
Till all were gathered on the seats
Around the Commons board.

That fearful stranger ! down he sat,
Unasked, yet undismayed ;
And on his lips a rising smile
Of scorn or pleasure played.

He took his hat and hung it up,
With slow but earnest air ;
He stripped his coat from off his back,
And placed it on a chair.

Then from his nearest neighbour's side
A knife and plate he drew ;
And, reaching out his hand again,
He took his teacup too.

How fled the sugar from the bowl !
How sunk the azure cream !
They vanished like the shapes that float
Upon a summer's dream.

A long, long draught,—an outstretched
hand,—
And crackers, toast, and tea,
They faded from the stranger's touch,
Like dew upon the sea.

Then clouds were dark on many a brow,
Fear sat upon their souls,
And, in a bitter agony,
They clasped their buttered rolls

A whisper trembled through the crowd,—
Who could the stranger be ?
And some were silent, for they thought
A cannibal was he.

What if the creature should arise,—
For he was stout and tall,—
And swallow down a sophomore,
Coat, crow's-foot, cap, and all !

All sullenly the stranger rose ;
They sat in mute despair ;
He took his hat from off the peg,
His coat from off the chair.

Four freshmen fainted on the seat,
Six swooned upon the floor ;
Yet on the fearful being passed,
And shut the chapel door.

There is full many a starving man,
That walks in bottle-green,
But never more that hungry one
In Commons-hall was seen.

Yet often at the sunset hour,
When tolls the evening bell,
The freshman lingers on the steps,
That frightful tale to tell.

THE TOADSTOOL.

THERE'S a thing that grows by the
fainting flower,
And springs in the shade of the lady's
bower ;
The lily shrinks, and the rose turns pale,
When they feel its breath in the summer
gale,
And the tulip curls its leaves in pride,
And the blue-eyed violet starts aside ;
But the lily may flaunt, and the tulip stare,
For what does the honest toadstool care ?

She does not glow in a painted vest,
And she never blooms on the maiden's
breast ;
But she comes, as the saintly sisters do,
In a modest suit of a Quaker hue.
And when the stars in the evening skies
Are weeping dew from their gentle eyes,
The toad comes out from his hermit cell,
The tale of his faithful love to tell.

O there is light in her lover's glance,
That flies to her heart like a silver lance ;
His breeches are made of spotted skin,
His jacket is tight, and his pumps are thin ;

In a cloudless night you may hear his song,
As its pensive melody floats along,
And, if you will look by the moonlight fair,
The trembling form of the toad is there.

And he twines his arms round her slender
stem,
In the shade of her velvet diadem ;
But she turns away in her maiden shame,
And will not breathe on the kindling flame ;
He sings at her feet through the livelong
night,
And creeps to his cave at the break of light ;
And whenever he comes to the air above,
His throat is swelling with baffled love.

THE SPECTRE PIG.

A BALLAD.

IT was the stalwart butcher man,
That knit his swarthy brow,
And said the gentle Pig must die,
And sealed it with a vow.

And oh ! it was the gentle Pig
Lay stretched upon the ground,
And ah ! it was the cruel knife
His little heart that found.

They took him then, those wicked men,
They trailed him all along ;
They put a stick between his lips,
And through his heels a thong ;

And round and round an oaken beam
A hempen cord they flung,
And, like a mighty pendulum,
All solemnly he swung !

Now say thy prayers, thou sinful man,
And think what thou hast done,
And read thy catechism well,
Thou bloody-minded one ;

For if his sprite should walk by night,
It better were for thee,
That thou wert mouldering in the ground,
Or bleaching in the sea.

It was the savage butcher then,
That made a mock of sin,
And swore a very wicked oath,
He did not care a pin.

It was the butcher's youngest son,—
His voice was broke with sighs,
And with his pocket-handkerchief
He wiped his little eyes ;

All young and ignorant was he,
But innocent and mild,
And, in his soft simplicity,
Out spoke the tender child :—

“ Oh, father, father, list to me ;
The Pig is deadly sick,
And men have hung him by his heels,
And fed him with a stick.”

It was the bloody butcher then,
That laughed as he would die,
Yet did he soothe the sorrowing child,
And bid him not to cry :—

“ Oh, Nathan, Nathan, what's a Pig,
That thou shouldst weep and wail ?
Come, bear thee like a butcher's child
And thou shalt have his tail !”

It was the butcher's daughter then,
So slender and so fair,
That sobbed as if her heart would break,
And tore her yellow hair ;

And thus she spoke in thrilling tone,—
Fast fell the tear-drops big :—
“ Ah ! woe is me ! Alas ! Alas !
The Pig ! The Pig ! The Pig !”

Then did her wicked father's lips
 Make merry with her woe,
And call her many a naughty name,
 Because she whimpered so.

Ye need not weep, ye gentle ones,
 In vain your tears are shed,
Ye cannot wash his crimson hand,
 Ye cannot soothe the dead.

The bright sun folded on his breast
 His robes of rosy flame,
And softly over all the west
 The shades of evening came.

He slept, and troops of murdered Pigs
 Were busy with his dreams ;
Loud rang their wild, unearthly shrieks,
 Wide yawned their mortal seams.

The clock struck twelve ; the Dead hath
 heard ;
He opened both his eyes,
And sullenly he shook his tail
 To lash the feeding flies.

One quiver of the hempen cord,—
 One struggle and one bound,—
With stiffened limb and leaden eye,
 The Pig was on the ground !

And straight towards the sleeper's house
His fearful way he wended ;
And hooting owl and hovering bat
On midnight wing attended.

Back flew the bolt, up rose the latch,
And open swung the door,
And little mincing feet were heard
Pat, pat along the floor.

Two hoofs upon the sanded floor,
And two upon the bed ;
And they are breathing side by side,
The living and the dead !

“ Now wake, now wake, thou butcher man !
What makes thy cheek so pale ?
Take hold ! take hold ! thou dost not fear
To clasp a spectre's tail ? ”

Untwisted every winding coil ;
The shuddering wretch took hold,
All like an icicle it seemed,
So tapering and so cold.

“ Thou com'st with me, thou butcher
man ! ”—
He strives to loose his grasp,
But, faster than the clinging vine,
Those twining spirals clasp.

And open, open swung the door,
And, fleeter than the wind,
The shadowy spectre swept before,
The butcher trailed behind.

Fast fled the darkness of the night,
And morn rose faint and dim ;
They called full loud, they knocked full long,
They did not waken him.

Straight, straight towards that oaken beam,
A trampled pathway ran ;
A ghastly shape was swinging there,—
It was the butcher man.

TO A CAGED LION.

POOR conquered monarch ! though that
 haughty glance
Still speaks thy courage unsubdued by
 time,
And in the grandeur of thy sullen tread
Lives the proud spirit of thy burning
 clime ;—
Fettered by things that shudder at thy
 roar,
Torn from thy pathless wilds to pace this
 narrow floor !

Thou wast the victor, and all Nature shrunk
Before the thunders of thine awful wrath ;
The steel-armed hunter viewed thee from
afar,

Fearless and trackless in thy lonely path !
The famished tiger closed his flaming eye,
And crouched and panted as thy step went
by !

Thou art the vanquished, and insulting man
Bars thy broad bosom as a sparrow's
wing ;

His nerveless arms thine iron sinews bind,
And lead in chains the desert's fallen
king ;

Are these the beings that have dared to
twine

Their feeble threads around those limbs of
thine ?

So must it be ; the weaker, wiser race,
That wields the tempest and that rides
the sea,

Even in the stillness of thy solitude
Must teach the lesson of its power to
thee ;

And thou, the terror of the trembling wild,
Must bow thy savage strength, the mockery
of a child !

THE STAR AND THE WATER-LILY.

THE sun stepped down from his golden
throne,
And lay in the silent sea,
And the Lily had folded her satin leaves,
For a sleepy thing was she ;
What is the Lily dreaming of ?
Why crisp the waters blue ?
See, see, she is lifting her varnished lid !
Her white leaves are glistening through !

The Rose is cooling his burning cheek
In the lap of the breathless tide ;—
The Lily hath sisters fresh and fair,
That would lie by the Rose's side ;
He would love her better than all the rest,
And he would be fond and true ;—
But the Lily unfolded her weary lids,
And looked at the sky so blue.

Remember, remember, thou silly one,
How fast will thy summer glide,
And wilt thou wither a virgin pale,
Or flourish a blooming bride ?
“ Oh, the Rose is old, and thorny, and cold,
And he lives on earth,” said she ;
“ But the Star is fair and he lives in the air,
And he shall my bridegroom be.”

But what if the stormy cloud should come,
 And ruffle the silver sea?
 Would he turn his eye from the distant sky,
 To smile on a thing like thee?
 Oh no, fair Lily, he will not send
 One ray from his far-off throne;
 The winds shall blow and the waves shall
 flow,
 And thou wilt be left alone.

There is not a leaf on the mountain-top,
 Nor a drop of evening dew,
 Nor a golden sand on the sparkling shore,
 Nor a pearl in the waters blue,
 That he has not cheered with his fickle
 smile,
 And warmed with his faithless beam,—
 And will he be true to a pallid flower,
 That floats on the quiet stream?

Alas for the Lily! she would not heed,
 But turned to the skies afar,
 And bared her breast to the trembling ray
 That shot from the rising star;
 The cloud came over the darkened sky,
 And over the waters wide:
 She looked in vain through the beating rain,
 And sank in the stormy tide.

ILLUSTRATION OF A PICTURE.

“A SPANISH GIRL IN REVERIE.”

SHE twirled the string of golden beads,
That round her neck was hung, —
My grandsire's gift; the good old man
Loved girls when he was young;
And, bending lightly o'er the cord,
And turning half away,
With something like a youthful sigh,
Thus spoke the maiden gray:—

“Well, one may trail her silken robe,
And bind her locks with pearls,
And one may wreath the woodland rose
Among her floating curls;
And one may tread the dewy grass,
And one the marble floor,
Nor half-hid bosom heave the less,
Nor brodered corset more!

“Some years ago, a dark-eyed girl
Was sitting in the shade,—
There's something brings her to my mind
In that young dreaming maid,—
And in her hand she held a flower,
A flower, whose speaking hue
Said, in the language of the heart,
'Believe the giver true.'

“And, as she looked upon its leaves,
 The maiden made a vow
 To wear it when the bridal wreath
 Was woven for her brow ;
 She watched the flower, as, day by day,
 The leaflets curled and died ;
 But he who gave it never came
 To claim her for his bride.

“Oh, many a summer’s morning glow
 Has lent the rose its ray,
 And many a winter’s drifting snow
 Has swept its bloom away ;
 But she has kept that faithless pledge
 To this, her winter hour,
 And keeps it still, herself alone,
 And wasted like the flower.”

Her pale lip quivered, and the light
 Gleamed in her moistening eyes ;—
 I asked her how she liked the tints
 In those Castilian skies ?
 “She thought them misty,—’twas perhaps
 Because she stood too near” ;
 She turned away, and as she turned
 I saw her wipe a tear.

A ROMAN AQUEDUCT.

THE sun-browned girl, whose limbs recline
When noon her languid hand has laid
Hot on the green flakes of the pine,
Beneath its narrow disk of shade ;

As, through the flickering noontide glare,
She gazes on the rainbow chain
Of arches, lifting once in air
The rivers of the Roman's plain ;—

Say, does her wandering eye recall
The mountain-current's icy wave,—
Or for the dead one tear let fall,
Whose founts are broken by their grave ?

From stone to stone the ivy weaves
Her braided tracery's winding veil,
And lacing stalks and tangled leaves
Nod heavy in the drowsy gale.

And lightly floats the pendent vine,
That swings beneath her slender bow,
Arch answering arch,—whose rounded line
Seems mirrored in the wreath below.

How patient Nature smiles at Fame !
The weeds, that strewed the victor's way,
Feed on his dust to shroud his name,
Green where his proudest towers decay.

See, through that channel, empty now,
The scanty rain its tribute pours,—
Which cooled the lip and laved the brow
Of conquerors from a hundred shores.

Thus bending o'er the nation's bier,
Whose wants the captive earth supplied,
The dew of Memory's passing tear
Falls on the arches of her pride!

FROM A BACHELOR'S PRIVATE
JOURNAL.

SWEET Mary, I have never breathed
The love it were in vain to name ;
Though round my heart a serpent wreathed,
I smiled, or strove to smile, the same.

Once more the pulse of Nature glows
With faster throb and fresher fire,
While music round her pathway flows,
Like echoes from a hidden lyre.

And is there none with me to share
The glories of the earth and sky ?
The eagle through the pathless air
Is followed by one burning eye.

Ah no ! the cradled flowers may wake,
 Again may flow the frozen sea,
 From every cloud a star may break,—
 There comes no second Spring to me.

Go,—ere the painted toys of youth
 Are crushed beneath the tread of years ;
 Ere visions have been chilled to truth,
 And hopes are washed away in tears.

Go,—for I will not bid thee weep,—
 Too soon my sorrows will be thine,
 And evening's troubled air shall sweep
 The incense from the broken shrine.

If Heaven can hear the dying tone
 Of chords that soon will cease to thrill,
 The prayer that Heaven has heard alone
 May bless thee when those chords are still.

LA GRISETTE.

A H Clemence ! when I saw thee last
 Trip down the Rue de Seine,
 And turning, when thy form had past,
 I said, “ We meet again,”—

I dreamed not in that idle glance
Thy latest image came,
And only left to memory's trance
A shadow and a name.

The few strange words my lips had taught
Thy timid voice to speak,
Their gentler signs, which often brought
Fresh roses to thy cheek,
The trailing of thy long loose hair
Bent o'er my couch of pain,
All, all returned, more sweet, more fair ;
Oh, had we met again !

I walked where saint and virgin keep
The vigil lights of Heaven,
I knew that thou hadst woes to weep,
And sins to be forgiven ;
I watched where Genevieve was laid,
I knelt by Mary's shrine,
Beside me low, soft voices prayed ;
Alas ! but where was thine ?

And when the morning sun was bright,
When wind and wave were calm,
And flamed, in thousand-tinted light,
The rose of Notre Dame,

I wandered through the haunts of men,
From Boulevard to Quai,
Till, frowning o'er Saint Étienne,
The Pantheon's shadow lay.

In vain, in vain ; we meet no more,
Nor dream what fates befall ;
And long upon the stranger's shore
My voice on thee may call,
When years have clothed the line in moss
That tells thy name and days,
And withered, on thy simple cross,
The wreaths of Père-la-Chaise !

OUR YANKEE GIRLS.

LET greener lands and bluer skies,
If such the wide earth shows,
With fairer cheeks and brighter eyes,
Match us the star and rose ;
The winds that lift the Georgian's veil,
Or wave Circassia's curls,
Waft to their shores the sultan's sail,—
Who buys our Yankee girls ?

The gay grisette, whose fingers touch
Love's thousand chords so well ;
The dark Italian, loving much,
But more than *one* can tell ;

And England's fair-haired, blue-eyed dame,
Who binds her brow with pearls ;
Ye who have seen them, can they shame
Our own sweet Yankee girls ?

And what if court or castle vaunt
Its children loftier born ?—
Who heeds the silken tassel's flaunt
Beside the golden corn ?
They ask not for the dainty toil
Of ribboned knights and earls,
The daughters of the virgin soil,
Our freeborn Yankee girls !

By every hill whose stately pines
Wave their dark arms above
The home where some fair being shines,
To warm the wilds with love,
From barest rock to bleakest shore
Where furthest sail unfurls,
That stars and stripes are streaming o'er,—
God bless our Yankee girls !

L'INCONNUE.

IS thy name Mary, maiden fair ?
Such should, methinks, its music be ;
The sweetest name that mortals bear
Were best befitting thee ;

And she to whom it once was given,
Was half of earth and half of heaven.

I hear thy voice, I see thy smile,
I look upon thy folded hair ;
Ah ! while we dream not they beguile,
Our hearts are in the snare ;
And she who chains a wild bird's wing
Must start not if her captive sing.

So, lady, take the leaf that falls,
To all but thee unseen, unknown ;
When evening shades thy silent walls,
Then read it all alone ;
In stillness read, in darkness seal,
Forget, despise, but not reveal !

STANZAS.

STRANGE ! that one lightly whispered
tone
Is far, far sweeter unto me,
Than all the sounds that kiss the earth,
Or breathe along the sea ;
But, lady, when thy voice I greet,
Not heavenly music seems so sweet.

I look upon the fair blue skies,
And naught but empty air I see ;
But when I turn me to thine eyes,
It seemeth unto me
Ten thousand angels spread their wings
Within those little azure rings.

The lily hath the softest leaf
That ever western breeze hath fanned,
But thou shalt have the tender flower
So I may take thy hand ;
That little hand to me doth yield
More joy than all the broidered field.

O lady ! there be many things
That seem right fair, below, above ;
But sure not one among them all
Is half so sweet as love ;—
Let us not pay our vows alone,
But join two altars both in one.

LINES BY A CLERK.

OH ! I did love her dearly,
And gave her toys and rings,
And I thought she meant sincerely,
When she took my pretty things.

But her heart has grown as icy
 As a fountain in the fall,
 And her love, that was so spicy,
 It did not last at all.

I gave her once a locket,
 It was filled with my own hair,
 And she put it in her pocket
 With very special care.
 But a jeweller has got it,—
 He offered it to me,
 And another that is not it
 Around her neck I see.

For my cooings and my billings
 I do not now complain,
 But my dollars and my shillings
 Will never come again ;
 They were earned with toil and sorrow,
 But I never told her that,
 And now I have to borrow,
 And want another hat.

Think, think, thou cruel Emma,
 When thou shalt hear my woe,
 And know my sad dilemma,
 That thou hast made it so.

See, see my beaver rusty,
Look, look upon this hole,
This coat is dim and dusty ;
Oh let it rend thy soul !

Before the gates of fashion
I daily bent my knee,
But I sought the shrine of passion,
And found my idol,—thee.
Though never love intenser
Had bowed a soul before it,
Thine eye was on the censer,
And not the hand that bore it.

THE PHILOSOPHER TO HIS LOVE.

DEAREST, a look is but a ray
Reflected in a certain way ;
A word, whatever tone it wear,
Is but a trembling wave of air ;
A touch, obedience to a clause
In Nature's pure material laws.

The very flowers that bend and meet,
In sweetening others, grow more sweet ;
The clouds by day, the stars by night,
Inweave their floating locks of light ;
The rainbow, Heaven's own forehead's braid,
Is but the embrace of sun and shade.

How few that love us have we found !
 How wide the world that girds them round !
 Like mountain streams we meet and part,
 Each living in the other's heart,
 Our course unknown, our hope to be
 Yet mingled in the distant sea.

But Ocean coils and heaves in vain,
 Bound in the subtle moonbeam's chain ;
 And love and hope do but obey
 Some cold, capricious planet's ray,
 Which lights and leads the tide it charms
 To Death's dark caves and icy arms.

Alas ! one narrow line is drawn,
 That links our sunset with our dawn ;
 In mist and shade life's morning rose,
 And clouds are round it at its close ;
 But ah ! no twilight beam ascends
 To whisper where that evening ends.

Oh ! in the hour when I shall feel
 Those shadows round my senses steal,
 When gentle eyes are weeping o'er
 The clay that feels their tears no more,
 Then let thy spirit with me be,
 Or some sweet angel, likest thee !

THE POET'S LOT.

WHAT is a poet's love?—
To write a girl a sonnet,
To get a ring, or some such thing,
And fustianize upon it.

What is a poet's fame?—
Sad hints about his reason,
And sadder praise from garreteers,
To be returned in season.

Where go the poet's lines?—
Answer, ye evening tapers!
Ye auburn locks, ye golden curls,
Speak from your folded papers!

Child of the ploughshare, smile;
Boy of the counter, grieve not,
Though muses round thy trundle-bed
Their broidered tissue weave not.

The poet's future holds
No civic wreath above him;
Nor slated roof, nor varnished chaise,
Nor wife nor child to love him.

Maid of the village inn,
Who workest woe on satin,
(The grass in black, the graves in green,
The epitaph in Latin,)

Trust not to them who say,
In stanzas, they adore thee;
Oh rather sleep in churchyard clay,
With urn and cherub o'er thee !

TO A BLANK SHEET OF PAPER.

WAN-VISAGED thing ! thy virgin leaf
To me looks more than deadly pale,
Unknowing what may stain thee yet,—
A poem or a tale.

Who can thy unborn meaning scan ?
Can Seer or Sibyl read thee now ?
No,—seek to trace the fate of man
Writ on his infant brow.

Love may light on thy snowy cheek,
And shake his Eden-breathing plumes ;
Then shalt thou tell how Lelia smiles,
Or Angelina blooms.

Satire may lift his bearded lance,
 Forestalling Time's slow-moving scythe,
 And, scattered on thy little field,
 Disjointed bards may writhe.

Perchance a vision of the night,
 Some grizzled spectre, gaunt and thin,
 Or sheeted corpse, may stalk along,
 Or skeleton may grin !

If it should be in pensive hour
 Some sorrow-moving theme I try,
 Ah, maiden, how thy tears will fall,
 For all I doom to die !

But if in merry mood I touch
 Thy leaves, then shall the sight of thee
 Sow smiles as thick on rosy lips
 As ripples on the sea.

The Weekly press shall gladly stoop
 To bind thee up among its sheaves;
 The Daily steal thy shining ore,
 To gild its leaden leaves.

Thou hast no tongue, yet thou canst speak,
 Till distant shores shall hear the sound ;
 Thou hast no life, yet thou canst breathe
 Fresh life on all around.

Thou art the arena of the wise,
 The noiseless battle-ground of fame;
 The sky where halos may be wreathed
 Around the humblest name.

Take, then, this treasure to thy trust,
 To win some idle reader's smile,
 Then fade and moulder in the dust,
 Or swell some bonfire's pile.

TO THE PORTRAIT OF "A GENTLE- MAN."

IN THE ATHENÆUM GALLERY.

IT may be so,—perhaps thou hast
 A warm and loving heart;
 I will not blame thee for thy face,
 Poor devil as thou art.

That thing thou fondly deem'st a nose,
 Unsightly though it be,—
 In spite of all the cold world's scorn,
 It may be much to thee.

Those eyes,—among thine elder friends
 Perhaps they pass for blue,—
 No matter,—if a man can see,
 What more have eyes to do?

Thy mouth,—that fissure in thy face,
 By something like a chin,—
 May be a very useful place
 To put thy victual in.

I know thou hast a wife at home,
 I know thou hast a child,
 By that subdued, domestic smile
 Upon thy features mild.

That wife sits fearless by thy side,
 That cherub on thy knee;
 They do not shudder at thy locks,
 They do not shrink from thee.

Above thy mantel is a hook,—
 A portrait once was there;
 It was thine only ornament,—
 Alas! that hook is bare.

She begged thee not to let it go,
 She begged thee all in vain;
 She wept,—and breathed a trembling prayer
 To meet it safe again.

It was a bitter sight to see
 That picture torn away;
 It was a solemn thought to think
 What all her friends would say!

And often in her calmer hours,
 And in her happy dreams,
 Upon its long-deserted hook
 The absent portrait seems.

Thy wretched infant turns his head
 In melancholy wise,
 And looks to meet the placid stare
 Of those unbending eyes.

I never saw thee, lovely one,—
 Perchance I never may ;
 It is not often that we cross
 Such people in our way ;

But if we meet in distant years,
 Or on some foreign shore,
 Sure I can take my Bible oath,
 I've seen that face before.

THE BALLAD OF THE OYSTERMAN.

IT was a tall young oysterman lived by
 the river-side,
 His shop was just upon the bank, his boat
 was on the tide ;

The daughter of a fisherman, that was so
straight and slim,
Lived over on the other bank, right opposite
to him.

It was the pensive oysterman that saw a
lovely maid,
Upon a moonlight evening, a-sitting in the
shade :
He saw her wave her handkerchief, as
much as if to say,
“I’m wide awake, young oysterman, and
all the folks away.”

Then up arose the oysterman, and to him-
self said he,
“I guess I’ll leave the skiff at home, for
fear that folks should see ;
I read it in the story-book, that, for to kiss
his dear,
Leander swam the Hellespont,—and I will
swim this here.”

And he has leapt into the waves, and
crossed the shining stream,
And he has clambered up the bank, all in
the moonlight gleam ;

Oh there were kisses sweet as dew, and
words as soft as rain,—
But they have heard her father's step, and
in he leaps again !

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—“Oh what
was that, my daughter ?”

“’Twas nothing but a pebble, sir, I threw
into the water.”

“And what is that, pray tell me, love,
that paddles off so fast?”

“It’s nothing but a porpoise, sir, that’s
been a swimming past.”

Out spoke the ancient fisherman,—“Now
bring me my harpoon !

I’ll get into my fishing-boat, and fix the
fellow soon.”

Down fell that pretty innocent, as falls a
snow-white lamb,

Her hair drooped round her pallid cheeks,
like seaweed on a clam.

Alas for those two loving ones ! she waked
not from her swound,

And he was taken with the cramp, and in
the waves was drowned ;

But fate has metamorphosed them, in
 pity of their woe,
 And now they keep an oyster-shop for
 mermaids down below.

A NOONTIDE LYRIC.

THE dinner-bell, the dinner-bell
 Is ringing loud and clear ;
 Through hill and plain, through street and
 lane,
 It echoes far and near ;
 From curtained hall and whitewashed stall,
 Wherever men can hide,
 Like bursting waves from ocean caves,
 They float upon the tide.

I smell the smell of roasted meat !
 I hear the hissing fry !
 The beggars know where they can go,
 But where, oh where shall I ?
 At twelve o'clock men took my hand,
 At two they only stare,
 And eye me with a fearful look,
 As if I were a bear !

The poet lays his laurels down,
 And hastens to his greens ;
 The happy tailor quits his goose,
 To riot on his beans ;

The weary cobbler snaps his thread,
The printer leaves his pie ;
His very devil hath a home,
But what, oh what have I ?

Methinks I hear an angel voice,
That softly seems to say :
“ Pale stranger, all may yet be well,
Then wipe thy tears away ;
Erect thy head, and cock thy hat,
And follow me afar,
And thou shalt have a jolly meal,
And charge it at the bar.”

I hear the voice ! I go ! I go !
Prepare your meat and wine !
They little heed their future need
Who pay not when they dine.
Give me to-day the rosy bowl,
Give me one golden dream,—
To-morrow kick away the stool,
And dangle from the beam !

THE HOT SEASON.

THE folks, that on the first of May
Wore winter coats and hose,
Began to say, the first of June,
“ Good Lord ! how hot it grows !”

At last two Fahrenheits blew up,
And killed two children small,
And one barometer shot dead
A tutor with its ball !

Now all day long the locusts sang
Among the leafless trees ;
Three new hotels warped inside out,
The pumps could only wheeze ;
And ripe old wine, that twenty years
Had cobwebbed o'er in vain,
Came spouting through the rotten corks
Like Joly's best champagne !

The Worcester locomotives did
Their trip in half an hour ;
The Lowell cars ran forty miles
Before they checked the power ;
Roll brimstone soon became a drug,
And loco-focos fell ;
All asked for ice, but everywhere
Saltpetre was to sell.

Plump men of mornings ordered tights,
But, ere the scorching noons,
Their candle-moulds had grown as loose
As Cossack pantaloons !

The dogs ran mad,—men could not try
If water they would choose ;
A horse fell dead,—he only left
Four red-hot, rusty shoes !

But soon the people could not bear
The slightest hint of fire ;
Allusions to caloric drew
A flood of savage ire ;
The leaves on heat were all torn out
From every book at school,
And many blackguards kicked and caned,
Because they said, “ Keep cool ! ”

The gas-light companies were mobbed,
The bakers all were shot,
The penny press began to talk
Of lynching Doctor Nott ;
And all about the warehouse steps
Were angry men in droves,
Crashing and splintering through the doors
To smash the patent stoves !

The abolition men and maids
Were tanned to such a hue,
You scarce could tell them from their
friends,
Unless their eyes were blue ;

And, when I left, society
Had burst its ancient guards,
And Brattle Street and Temple Place
Were interchanging cards !

A PORTRAIT.

A STILL, sweet, placid, moonlight face,
And slightly nonchalant,
Which seems to claim a middle place
Between one's love and aunt,
Where childhood's star has left a ray
In woman's sunniest sky,
As morning dew and blushing day
On fruit and blossom lie.

And yet,—and yet I cannot love
Those lovely lines on steel ;
They beam too much of heaven above,
Earth's darker shades to feel ;
Perchance some early weeds of care
Around my heart have grown,
And brows unfurrowed seem not fair,
Because they mock my own.

Alas ! when Eden's gates were sealed,
How oft some sheltered flower
Breathed o'er the wanderers of the field,
Like their own bridal bower ;

Yet, saddened by its loveliness,
And humbled by its pride,
Earth's fairest child they could not bless, —
It mocked them when they sighed.

AN EVENING THOUGHT.

WRITTEN AT SEA.

IF sometimes in the dark blue eye,
Or in the deep red wine,
Or soothed by gentlest melody,
Still warms this heart of mine,
Yet something colder in the blood,
And calmer in the brain,
Have whispered that my youth's bright
flood
Ebbs, not to flow again.

If by Helvetia's azure lake,
Or Arno's yellow stream,
Each star of memory could awake,
As in my first young dream,
I know that when mine eye shall greet
The hillsides bleak and bare,
That gird my home, it will not meet
My childhood's sunsets there.

Oh, when love's first, sweet, stolen kiss
Burned on my boyish brow,
Was that young forehead worn as this?
Was that flushed cheek as now?
Were that wild pulse and throbbing heart
Like these, which vainly strive,
In thankless strains of soulless art,
To dream themselves alive?

Alas ! the morning dew is gone,
Gone ere the full of day ;
Life's iron fetter still is on,
Its wreaths all torn away ;
Happy if still some casual hour
Can warm the fading shrine,
Too soon to chill beyond the power
Of love, or song, or wine !

THE WASP AND THE HORNET.

THE two proud sisters of the sea,
In glory and in doom !—
Well may the eternal waters be
Their broad, unsculptured tomb !
The wind that rings along the wave,
The clear, unshadowed sun,
Are torch and trumpet o'er the brave,
Whose last green wreath is won !

No stranger-hand their banners furled,
 No victor's shout they heard ;
 Unseen, above them ocean curled,
 Save by his own pale bird ;
 The gnashing billows heaved and fell ;
 Wild shrieked the midnight gale ;
 Far, far beneath the morning swell
 Were pennon, spar, and sail.

The land of freedom ! Sea and shore
 Are guarded now, as when
 Her ebbing waves to victory bore
 Fair barks and gallant men ;
 Oh, many a ship of prouder name
 May wave her starry fold,
 Nor trail, with deeper light of fame,
 The paths they swept of old !

"QUI VIVE?"

"*QUI VIVE?*" The sentry's musket
 Rings,
 The channelled bayonet gleams ;
 High o'er him, like a raven's wings
 The broad tricoloured banner flings
 Its shadow, rustling as it swings
 Pale in the moonlight beams ;

Pass on ! while steel-clad sentries keep
Their vigil o'er the monarch's sleep,
Thy bare, unguarded breast
Asks not the unbroken, bristling zone
That girds yon sceptred trembler's throne;—
Pass on, and take thy rest !

“*Qui vive ?*” How oft the midnight air
That startling cry has borne !
How oft the evening breeze has fanned
The banner of this haughty land,
O'er mountain snow and desert sand,
Ere yet its folds were torn !
Through Jena's carnage flying red,
Or tossing o'er Marengo's dead,
Or curling on the towers
Where Austria's eagle quivers yet,
And suns the ruffled plumage, wet
With battle's crimson showers !

“*Qui vive ?*” And is the sentry's cry,—
The sleepless soldier's hand,—
Are these—the painted folds that fly
And lift their emblems, printed high
On morning mist and sunset sky—
The guardians of a land ?

No ! If the patriot's pulses sleep,
How vain the watch that hirelings keep,—
The idle flag that waves,
When Conquest, with his iron heel,
Treads down the standards and the steel
That belt the soil of slaves !

NOTES.

Page 7. *They're as safe as Dan'l Malcolm.*

The following epitaph is still to be read on a tall gravestone standing as yet undisturbed among the transplanted monuments of the dead in Copp's Hill Burial-Ground, one of the three city cemeteries which have been desecrated and ruined within my own remembrance :—

“ Here lies buried in a
Stone Grave 10 feet deep,
Capt. DANIEL MALCOLM Mercht.
Who departed this Life
October 23rd, 1769,
Aged 44 years,
a true son of Liberty,
a Friend to the Publick,
an Enemy to oppression,
and one of the foremost
in opposing the Revenue Acts
on America.”

Page 80. *This broad-browed youth.*

Benjamin Robbins Curtis.

Page 80. *The stripling, smooth of face and slight.*

George Tyler Bigelow.

KING ALFRED'S COLLEGE

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